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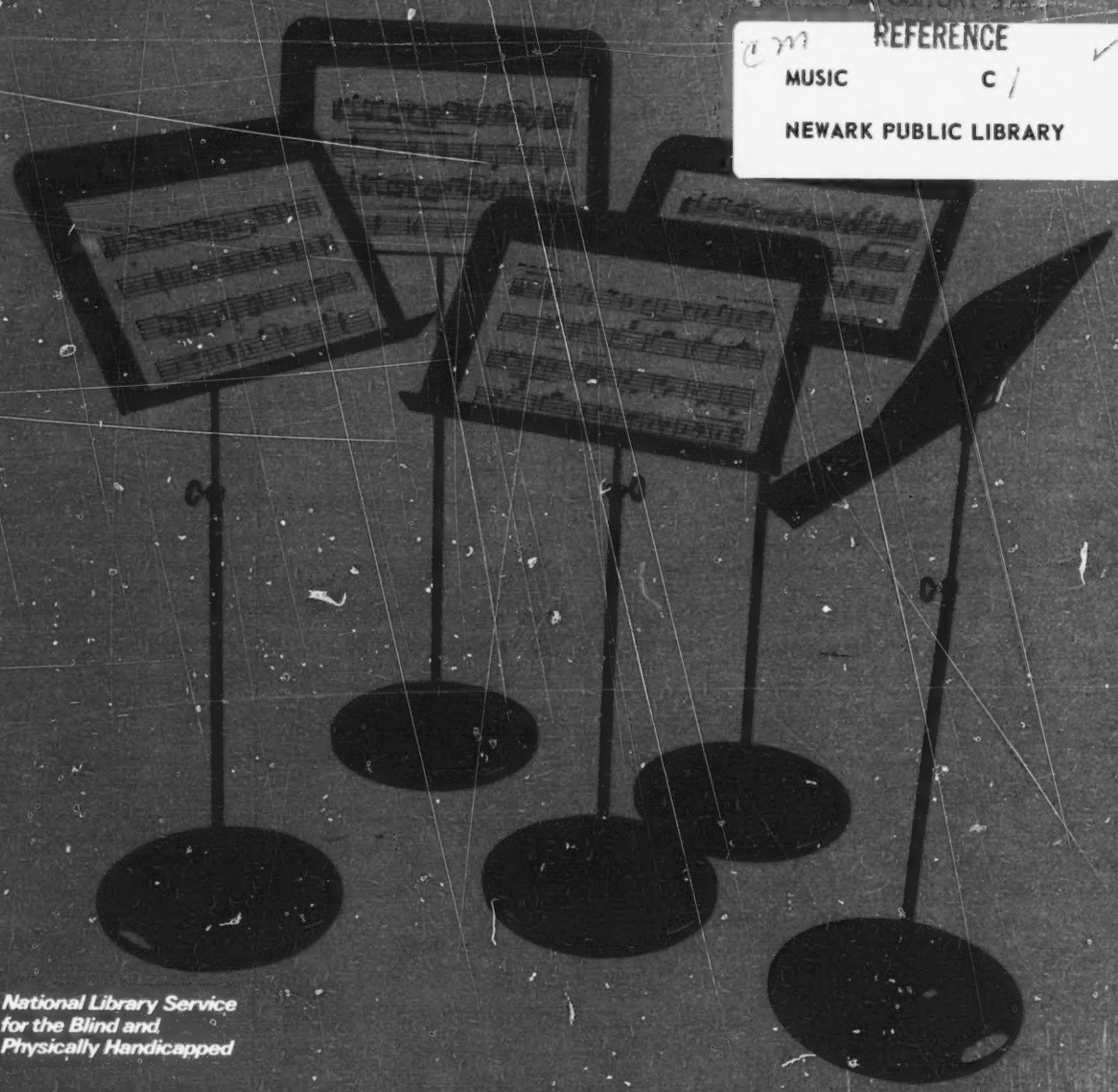

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Selected Reprints

Antonius Stradivarius

by Marilyn Kochman
Frets Magazine
August, 1981

Antonio Stradivari's name suggests the apotheosis of craftsmanship. To this day, the consummate artist from eighteenth-century Cremona, Italy, remains unrivalled in the beauty, tone, form, and construction of his stringed instruments, and his works serve as models for modern-day craftsmen. There have been numerous outstanding instrument makers throughout history, to be sure, but few can compare with Stradivari. When considering all of the features that comprise excellence in stringed-instrument making—beauty of workmanship and design, careful construction, and power and richness of tone—Stradivari's instruments reign supreme.

Antonio Stradivari's superb craftsmanship and prolific creativity for years have baffled those who attempted to understand his genius. Legends galore have been generated about Stradivari. Through the centuries, some have claimed that he possessed "supernatural ability to select the right wood," while others have insisted that he had "mysterious knowledge of acoustic principles." Still others have sworn that Stradivari's genius lay solely in the varnish that he used. Modern research has shattered those myths. Today it is recognized that the heart of Stradivari's genius lay largely in his personality itself. Stradivari was a flawless craftsman whose boundless creativity, sense of aesthetics, and undying need for expression compelled him to seek perfection in his art until the end of his life.

Stradivari was not only a master craftsman, he was a superior designer as well. Among the relics of his work are detailed drawings for such violin parts as pegs, bridges, tailpieces, and even violin cases and bows. His productivity is astounding. It has been estimated that he produced 1,116 instruments altogether, roughly half of which are still in existence. Stradivari, who spent 70 of his 93 years making instruments, produced on the average of two violins, or one cello, per month. In addition to his violins and cellos, for which he is best known, he made violas, guitars, and violas da gamba. Antonio Stradivari (also known by the Latinized form of his name, Antoni*us* Stradivari*us*), lived from 1644–1737; and during the span of his life, there were few established formal acoustic principles that he could rely on, although interest in the science of acoustics had existed from the time of the ancient Greeks and Romans.

In the sixth century B.C., the Greek philosopher and mathematician Pythagoras discovered several phenomena regarding acoustic properties of vibrating strings. Centuries later, the Italian scientist Galileo (1565–1642) recognized additional characteristics of vibrating objects. Then Marin Mersenne (1588–1648), an early French physicist, measured the frequency of musical tones. In his book *Harmonicorum Liber*, written in 1636—just eight years before the birth of Stradivari—Mersenne published the first explanation of how strings vibrate. It

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can be presumed that these studies were not widely accessible. So, for acoustic information, Stradivari must have sought solutions in the same manner as these great scientists sought their answers; he had no choice but to arrive at his own conclusions. For the details of his craft, however, he was able to familiarize himself with the works of the great craftsmen who came before him.

Stradivari lived during the most productive period in the history of the violin, although the instrument was being made before his time. The exact origin of the violin is not known, but the man credited with having made the most significant changes in its development is Andrea Amati (1511–1580), a Cremonese craftsman who originally made lutes and viols. In his book *The Glory of the Violin* (Viking Press, New York, 1973), Joseph Wechsburg states that Amati "freed himself from the heritage of the older viol and the different set of acoustic laws on which it is based." Andrea Amati established the characteristics that would become known as the "Amati school," embodied through the works of his progeny. Nicoló Amati (1596–1684), grandson of Andrea, and Stradivari's mentor, is considered by far the most significant descendent of the Amati family.

The most distinguishable characteristics of the Amati school of violin-making were the high arching of the body (the violin's belly was flat near the edges and rose suddenly towards the middle), the graceful outline, and the protruding corners. Also distinctive was the yellow-toned varnish of the instruments (referred to as the "Amati yellow"), which had a soft, supple consistency. The tone of the Amati instruments was soft, sweet, and delicate.

Just thirty miles away from Cremona, another violin-making center was flourishing in the Lombardian province of Brescia. There, another major figure in the history of the violin lived and worked. He was Gasparo da Saló (154?–1609), baptized Gasparo Bertolotti, and born at Polpenazze, a small town next to Saló (from which he got his name) on Lake Garda. Like Andrea Amati, who established the principal features of the Cremonese school, Gasparo established the principle features of the Brescian school. Gasparo's student, Giovanni Paolo Maggini (1580–1632) also had great impact on the history of the development of the violin. His instruments appropriately reflect the style of his teacher, though he did introduce some individual characteristics, such as narrower space in the instrument's soundholes, and a thinner varnish.

At this early stage in the history of the violin, two distinct schools of instrument building already were emerging. In contrast to the high archings of the Amati (or Cremonese-style) instruments, the archings of Gasparo's instruments (Brescian-style) were low and broad. Instead of the Amati pointed corners, Gasparo's were short and blunt. Instead of just one row of purfling that Amati used, two rows were often used on Gasparo's instruments. The soundholes, which were delicate and narrow on Amati's instruments, were longer and heavier-looking on Gasparo's instruments. Instead of the yellow varnish that the Amati violins featured, a yellow-brown varnish was applied to Gasparo's instruments, and it was

applied more heavily than was the varnish on the Cremonese instruments. The wood of the Brescian instruments was heavier as well. These differences in construction naturally created a difference in tone between the instruments of these two schools. Unlike the soft, sweet, silvery tones of the Amati instruments, those of the Brescian school had dark and sonorous tones.

Although it is impossible to determine exactly how many instruments were produced in any given time during the early historic period of the violin, some scholars have ventured educated estimates. In *The Glory of the Violin,* violin historian Dario D'Attili claims that more than 10,000 stringed instruments were produced in Cremona between 1550, the height of Andrea Amati's career, and 1883, when craftsman Enrico Ceruti died. The "golden age" in the history of the violin is considered to be the 150-year period starting with the birth of Nicoló Amati in 1596, and ending with the deaths of both Guarneri del Gesú (Joseph Guarnerius) in 1744, and of Carlo Bergonzi in 1747.

Little personal information is known about Antonio Stradivari. Cremona had a long history of ravaging wars, and most of the city's official documents were destroyed. Records of Stradivari's birth do not exist, but historians believe that Stradivari was born in a town near Cremona in 1644, and that later his family moved to Cremona—possibly to give him the opportunity to apprentice with the renowned Nicoló Amati. Stradivari's age has been determined through the labels on some of his later instruments, on which he wrote his age as well as the year in which the instrument was made.

The first official document relating to Stradivari is a marriage certificate of 1667. In that year he married Francesca Feraboschi Capra, 25. Her first husband, Giovanni Giacomo Capra, was a mathematician who in 1664 committed suicide with an arquebus (an early gun) on the Piazza S. Agata (an open square, today called Piazza Garibaldi). Antonio and Francesca lived in the Casa del Pescatore ("house of the fisherman") in Cremona until 1660, when they moved to No. 2 Piazza San Domenico. Today that street is a large modern square in the center of town, and the building at the site on which he lived and worked bears an inscription in Italian, which translates closely as:

Here Stood The House
In Which
Antonio Stradivari
Brought The Violin To Its
Highest Perfection
And Left To Cremona
An Imperishable Name As Master
Of His Craft.

Stradivari's house had three stories, and legend has it that he often could be seen hanging his instruments out on the roof to facilitate the drying of the varnish. Antonio and Francesca had five boys and one girl, though one of the sons died when the infant was only six days old. Of the remaining sons, only two, Francesco and Omobono, became instrument craftsmen, and they were greatly overshadowed by their father.

In 1698, Stradivari's first wife died. A little over a year later, Antonio remarried, wedding Signora Antonio Maria Zambelli, who eventually bore him one daughter and four sons.

As to what Stradivari looked like, one can only guess, as no portraits of him remain. Throughout the centuries, artists have rendered their impressions of him in various media, but there is only one piece of information about his physical appearance that has been passed down through the generations: "He [Stradivari] was tall and thin in appearance; he wore a white woolen cap in the winter; a white cotton cap in the summer; and a white leather apron over his clothes. His costume seldom varied because he always worked." That statement, made by nineteenth-century violinist Giovanni Battista Polledro, whose teacher knew Stradivari, cannot be proven true or false, but it certainly has inspired a number of artists.

Stradivari died in 1737 and was buried in the church of St. Domenico. In 1869, the town decided to build a public garden at the site. The old church was demolished, and the tomb destroyed. The only remaining relic is the Stradivari's headstone, preserved in Cremona's Municipal Museum.

* * *

In the mid-1650s, Stradivari began his apprenticeship with Nicoló Amati. Apprenticing was common in Italy at the time, and among Amati's other students were Andrea Guarneri (whose grandson Joseph would receive acclaim almost equal to that of Stradivari), Giovanni Battista Rugeri, Francesco Rugeri, and Hieronymous Amati (Nicoló's son). Some historians believe that Stradivari worked for Amati until Nicoló's death (1684), but others point out that Stradivari probably began working on his own in 1666, the year given on his first label. The exact position that Stradivari had in his mentor's workshop is not known.

Like most creative geniuses, Stradivari exhibited different stages of development. His earliest instruments were modelled after Amati's smaller pattern, and thus that period is known as Stradivari's Amatisé Period, which lasted roughly until Amati's death in 1684. The small-form Amati that Stradivari used as a model (Amati also made a larger "Grand Pattern") measured 352 mm (13⅞″) long in the body, 202 mm (7-15/16″) wide in the lower bouts, 162 mm (6⅜″) wide at upper bouts, 30 mm (1-3/16″) high in the lower ribs, and 28.5 mm (1⅛″) high in the upper ribs.

Stradivari in no way duplicated his teacher's instruments. There were similarities, to be sure, such as Stradivari's use of the Amati yellow varnish, the use of wedge-cut (pie-cut) maple for the instrument's back, ribs, and pegbox, and the use of pine cut with the grain for the instrument's belly. But these features were used merely as a starting-off point. Even at his early stage of development, Stradivari's individuality began to assert itself. His instruments appeared to be heavier than those of Amati: the curvatures were less rounded, the corners were shorter and more blunt, the soundholes were placed closer together and were more angular in their curves. The dimensions also slightly varied.

It has been suggested that until about 1684, the soft, woody tone of Stradivari's instruments could hardly be distinguished from the tones of Amati's instruments. The wood that Stradivari used on these early instruments was of a lesser quality than was the wood he used in later periods. He used

maple that was locally obtained, or another type of local wood that had a small curly figure running with the grain, rather than across it. In contrast to Amati's instruments, the curly figure in Stradivari's wood is large and not as closely spaced. It is probable that Stradivari, like the other craftsmen of the time, was practical in his approach to the craft. He and his contemporaries used materials that were readily available. If they were paid more by their patrons, however, they obtained better-quality material, such as woods from neighboring countries.

The word "pine," used to describe the type of wood that was used for the bellies of most of Stradivari's instruments, is somewhat misleading. The pine family (piceace) is a botanical category in which there are about thirty species; the wood that is commonly called "spruce" is a member of this family. Austrian pine (pinus nigra) grows abundantly in Southern Europe, and Bosnian pine (pinus leucodermis) and Corsican pine (pinus nigra maritima) thrive in Northern Italy. There are only two species of "spruce" that grow in Europe. Norway spruce (pinus abies) is the tallest tree in Europe and flourishes in the Italian Tyrol in the Alpine foothills, and Serbian spruce (pinus omorika) grows in Eastern Yugoslavia. It is likely that these are the trees from which Stradivari chose his materials. All of these timbers can yield close-grained, high-quality soundboard wood. The reference to "pine," therefore, does not carry the cheap, lumber-grade connotation to which the term is applied in the United States.

Maple is a member of the aceraceae family, of which there are a few species in Europe. "Curly" maple, chosen for its decorative quality, is a phenomenon of nature and not a species. The close proximity of the "curls" on the "Circle Strad" qualifies the wood as "fiddle maple," and during Stradivari's life the material undoubtedly was as difficult to obtain in regular quantities as it is today.

In the major source on the subject, *Antonio Stradivari: His Life and Work*, by W. Henry Hill, Arthur F. Hill, and Alfred E. Hill [Dover Publications, New York, 1963], first published in 1902, the renowned brothers write, "We cannot too much insist upon the fact that all these Brescians and Cremonese masters were purely and simply working artisans, guided by practical experience and the circumstance of the moment. When well remunerated, either in money or in patronage, they did their best, and used their finest material then obtainable, and vice versa. Their powers of discrimination were in no way superior to those of the thoughtful craftsman today. . . . That Stradivari brought to bear a certain amount of judgement in the selection of his materials is beyond discussion, but that he possessed any special knowledge other than that of an intelligent craftsman, well versed in the traditions of his craft, we are constrained to deny. . . . Nothing more ridiculous can be supposed than that the species both of maple and of pine which the Cremonese so ably utilised no longer exists. . . . We unhesitatingly assert that modern violin makers have a choice of material equal in every respect to that which existed at the time of Stradivari, and of infinitely greater variety."

The Long Strad Period

Stradivari's second artistic period—

considered by some to be his most experimental—is known as the "Long Strad" period. It commenced in 1690, six years after Amati's death, and lasted until 1698, although he did make several instruments of the same dimensions a few years after. The design, as the name indicates, was what appeared to be a longer instrument, but in reality measured only about 6 mm (¼″) longer in the body than did his earlier instruments. Because Stradivari deftly altered the proportions of each part to suit the new length, the instruments appeared much longer.

The bouts were longer and less curved; the corners were a little shorter; the margins around the edges were reduced. Most significant was the change in the arching of the belly and of the back. It was noticeably flatter than the instruments from his Amatisé period. In addition, the soundholes were placed in a more upright position than were the soundholes on his earlier instruments. Backs, originally made from two pieces, were in this period usually made from one piece cut with the grain. The varnish Stradivari used on these instruments had a deeper, richer tint and leaned towards a golden color.

The dimensions of a typical Long Strad were: 363.5 mm (14-5/16″) body length; 204.5 mm (8″) wide at lower bout; 163.5 mm (6-7/16″) wide at upper bout; 31.5 mm (1¼″) high at lower ribs; 30 mm (1-3/16″) high at upper ribs. The C-bouts were 6 mm (¼″) longer than they previously were; rather than 76 mm (3″) long, they measured 82 mm (3¼″). This, more than the extra 6 mm (¼″) in body length, created the elongated appearance. It has been suggested that during the Long Strad period, Stradivari attempted to combine in one violin the tonal characteristics of both the Maggini and the Amati instruments.

The main drawback of the Long Strads was the difficulty players encountered. The distance from the bridge to the neck joint was 197 mm (7¾″), which was 3 mm (⅛″) longer than that of most of Stradivari's other violins, and about 6 mm (¼″) longer than that of many instruments by other makers. Perhaps due to the lack of demand, few Long Strads were made after 1698.

The Golden Strad Period

The beginning of the eighteenth century marks the commencement of Stradivari's "Golden" period, so named because of the great number of masterpieces that were produced at a phenomenally fast rate. Between 1700 and 1710, Stradivari produced 98 violins, 2 violas, and 5 cellos. From 1710–1720—the most prolific decade—Stradivari produced 125 violins and 11 cellos. The instruments that Stradivari produced between 1720 and 1730 are also remarkably fine, especially considering that he was in his seventies and eighties during those years.

The Betts violin of 1704 (named after violinist Arthur Betts) exemplifies the perfection that Stradivari is known for—it is considered to be one of the greatest works of his life. The instrument's corners are long and slender; the outline is perfectly symmetrical; the soundholes are upright and elegantly cut; and the maple and pine are of the highest quality. With the Betts, Stradivari had finally achieved an instrument that possessed the dark, rich tone of the Brescian instru-

ments, but had smaller dimensions and therefore was easier to play. By the new century, Stradivari was making a 355.5 mm (14″) violin; instead of a yellowish-gold varnish, he started to use a deep orange-red varnish.

Besides the Betts, there are numerous other instruments made during the Golden period that are outstanding examples of Stradivari's genius. The names given to these prized masterpieces offer fascinating insights into the history of their ownership and suggest a deep affection and sense of identity that each owner had with his instrument.

Usually a Stradivari instrument was named after one of its owners, or for a marked physical or tonal characteristic of the instrument, or for some special circumstance that the instrument endured. The Betts violin (previously mentioned as being owned by violinist Arthur Betts), and the Tuscan, made in 1690 and commissioned by the Duke of Tuscany, were named after their respective owners, as were the Auer (1691), Vieuxtemps (1710), and Paganini (1727) violins (named after nineteenth-century violinists Leopold Auer, Pierre Vieuxtemps, and Nicoló Paganini).

The Circle Strad (1701) received its name from a distinguishing lightly drawn arc on the instrument's back: the Dolphin (1714) was so named because its back has a striking iridescence that is reminiscent of a dolphin's skin; the Messiah (1716), named following Stradivari's death, is said to have been his favorite, and a violin that he never parted with.

The naming of the Messiah came from a chance remark someone uttered, and it deserves special note. The violin was sold in 1827 to the famous Italian collector Luigi Tarisio, and was hidden from the world until 1854, when Tarisio died. Tarisio was known to talk profusely about the beautiful instrument, yet he never would let anyone see it because he prized it so greatly. One day, violinist Delphin Alard heard one comment too many of Tarisio's raptures about the secret instrument, and Alard remarked that the violin was constantly talked about, yet never seen by anyone—just like the Messiah. From that day on, the name stuck.

The story of Stradivari's instruments would not be possible had it not been for this same Luigi Tarisio (1792–1854). His dedication to and recognition of Stradivari's work drove him to purchase and protect hundreds of Stradivari's finest instruments, saving them from destruction. It is said that through Tarisio's hands passed almost every instrument Stradivari ever made.

The Lord Nelson Strad (1690) survived a war, and took the name of the hero. During the Battle of Trafalgar in 1805, in which the British achieved a crucial naval victory over French and Spanish fleets during the Napoleonic Wars, a Stradivari violin—for reasons unknown—was taken on Nelson's flagship by one of the commander's officers. Whether or not any music was played on the instrument to boost the soldiers' morale will never be known, but at the end of the battle, the violin was still unscathed.

The naming of the Court Strad (1701) revolves around one of the most interesting circumstances surrounding the naming of a Stradivari violin. During a legal dispute (*Johnstone vs. Laurie*, a three-day trial in the Court of Session, Edinburgh, Scotland),

the British instrument dealer David Laurie sold a violin to his customer (Johnstone) claiming that the violin was a genuine Stradivari. What the plaintiff Johnstone didn't know was that the instrument was a composite of several different Stradivari parts originally intended for different violins. All of the parts, except the left upper rib, were authentic. When Johnstone suspected that the violin was not a completely genuine Stradivari, he sued Laurie. In court, the violin was accepted as a Strad, but the dealer lost the case because he hadn't stated at the time of the sale that the instrument was a composite. The episode earned the instrument the name, "Court Strad."

The violins were named after the elite, since Stradivari's customers were primarily nobility, church dignitaries, and distinguished musicians. Stradivari's patrons could afford to pay him well for his work, and legend has it that an expression evolved which reflected his financial status: "ricco come Stradivari"—rich as Stradivari.

His Last Years

Stradivari's final artistic period was roughly between 1730 and 1737, the last seven years of his life, and it was shaped by the unsteady hands of an old man. The violins of this period were not as fine as his earlier work. The late instruments have irregular purfling, corners and edges that are blunt and squarish, scroll carvings that do not exhibit the grandeur of his previous creations, and a varnish (more heavily applied and lacking the soft texture and transparency of his previous finishes) of not nearly the quality he had once achieved. His sons, Francesco and Omobono, helped him during these years—the only assistants Stradivari ever had.

The Stradivari Cellos

Like his violins, Stradivari's cellos are noteworthy for their design, symmetry, beauty, and tone. As with his violins, he created several different models until he found the one most suited to the musical needs of the day.

Between 1680 and 1700, most of Stradivari's cellos were modelled after the large form made in the late 1500s by Andrea Amati and his two sons, Antonio and Hieronymous. Prior to the seventeenth century, 4-string viols were in wide use. In its early stages, the cello adopted the viola da gamba role, and was used primarily in church to accompany recitative (chanting). Since players rarely went beyond the first position, they had no difficulty playing the large-model cellos. Moreover, there was not much cello music to learn between 1540 and 1630, because no solo music had been written for the cello.

An early Amati cello had the following dimensions: (body) 787 mm (31″) long; 476 mm (18¾″) wide at the lower bout; 368 mm (14½″) wide at the upper bout; 119 mm (4-11/16″) high at the lower ribs; 114 mm (4½″) high at upper ribs. (A modern-day cello will measure approximately 730 mm–760 mm (28¾″–30″) in body length; 432 mm (17″) wide in the lower bouts; 342 mm (13½″) wide at the upper bouts; and 110–115 mm (4⅜″–4½″) for the height of the ribs.)

In the mid-seventeenth century, a school of cello soloists emerged and suggested changing the dimensions of the cello to facil-

itate their playing. Between 1660 and 1700, many makers did experiment with smaller dimensions, but it was not until the mid-eighteenth century, after Stradivari had died, that makers totally abandoned the cello of the larger dimensions.

The earliest Stradivari cello-type instrument dates from 1667. It is not a genuine cello, but rather a combination of the main features of both the viol and the cello. It has the outline of a cello and the flat back of a viol. The first authentic cello made by Stradivari was dated in 1684. As with the violins of the same period, the backs and ribs of these cellos were cut on the slab, and the varnish was yellowish in color. Like the other makers of the time, Stradivari used four pieces of pine for the cello's belly, both because of the scarcity of wide slabs of consistent-grain wood, and to insure blemish-free pieces. The craftsmen of this period made their cellos by sketching out their violin's dimensions to larger proportions, in essence transferring their violin's main features to their cellos.

Outstanding examples of Stradivari's cellos are the Cristiani (1700), named after the owner, Mademoiselle Cristiani (1827–1853). The instrument has a plum-red varnish, and the body length is 19 mm (¾″) shorter than that of Stradivari's pre-1700 instruments. The Duport (1711), another outstanding example, has a body length of 758 mm (29⅞″) as opposed to the 774 mm (30½″) body length of the Cristiani. The Batta cello (1714), made the same year as was the Dolphin violin, has many of the same characteristics as its smaller counterpart. The belly is tight-grain pine, the maple back has a broad curly figure, and each soundhole is widely cut. The Piatti (1720) is both beautiful to look at and to hear. The varnish is a rich, red color with a soft texture. The ribs have broad curly figures, and the belly's pine has evenly-spaced grain.

The overriding merits of Stradivari's cellos were their perfect symmetry, their flawless workmanship, and their purity of tone.

The Stradivari Violas

Stradivari made very few violas, probably as few as twelve. Until the end of the seventeenth century, violas were modelled after those of Gasparo da Saló and of Andrea Amati. Dimensions ranged in body length from 444 mm–452 mm (17½″–17-13/16″); 257 mm–268 mm (10⅛″ to 10-9/16″) wide for the lower bouts; 215 mm–219 mm (8½″–8⅝″) wide at the upper bouts. The lower ribs were from 39 mm (1-9/16″) high to 41 mm (1⅝″) high; the upper ribs were 38 mm (1½″) wide. Stradivari used a smaller model viola, as was the practice between 1660 and 1700. His earliest known viola is from 1672, and is smaller than his later models. It is somewhat of a mystery as to why makers began using the smaller model. Between 1650 and 1750, the demand for violas had drastically decreased, and makers in most countries practically stopped producing them. This, of course, was related to the music of the time, the leading form of which was the trio sonata, consisting of two violins and some other instrument. Prior to this period, the dominating musical form was a five-part ensemble in which two or three violas were needed. It was not until the mid-eighteenth century, when Joseph Haydn developed the string quartet, that the viola regained its significance.

The tones of the violas are so similar to those of the violins, that sometimes the larger instruments can't be distinguished from the violins. In that sense, the violas are not as highly regarded as are the violins and cellos. On the whole, the wood, color of the varnish, and other main features of the violas correspond with those of Stradivari's violins made in the same years.

The Construction of His Instruments

There are two major changes that have taken place in the construction of the violin since Stradivari's time. One is the length and position of the violin's fingerboard and neck; the other is the dimension of the bass bar.

The necks of Stradivari's violins had the same dimensions as those of Amati's violins. They varied from 120 mm–123 mm (4¾"–4⅞") from the nut to the edge of the belly; the corresponding part on a modern violin measures 128 mm–130 mm (5-1/16–5⅛"). On a Stradivari violin, the width of the neck at the top of the fingerboard ranged from 25 mm–26 mm (1"–1-1/16"); on a modern violin, the width is 22 mm (⅞"). On a Stradivari violin, the width of the neck where it joins the belly was from 33 mm–44 mm (1-5/16"–1¾"). On a modern violin that width is 31 mm (1¼"). These dimensions show that the neck of a modern violin is longer and narrower than that of a Stradivari instrument. On Stradivari's violins, the neck-angle was less acute, so that the neck came almost level with the edge. A small groove was cut in the neck to allow it to pass over the edge. On modern violins, the neck slants backwards and stands up from the belly about 5 mm–6 mm (3/16"–¼"). To obtain height at the bridge, Stradivari used a wedge-shaped fingerboard. Modern violin makers achieve the desired height by angling the neck to a more acute angle.

Since the necks were shorter, the fingerboards also were shorter than those of modern violins. Stradivari's fingerboards varied in length; the shortest known fingerboard measured 190 mm (7½") long; the width at the bottom was 38 mm (1½"); the width at the top was 27 mm (1-1/16"). The modern fingerboard measures 260 mm (10½") long, 22 mm (⅞") wide at the bottom, and 41 mm (1⅝") wide at the top.

The fingerboards usually were made out of odd cuttings from the maple wood used for the backs; sometimes Stradivari veneered the fingerboard in ebony, or decorated it by inlaying a line of ivory and ebony along the edge; other times he decorated the entire fingerboard surface with a design of purfling.

The reason behind the lengthening of both the neck and the fingerboard is directly related to the music of the times. In Stradivari's lifetime, players rarely went beyond the third and fourth positions, because the music did not demand it. Nineteenth- and twentieth-century music, however, demands far greater technical sophistication from modern violinists, and instruments had to be built—or modified—to accommodate the new technical demands.

The second major difference in the modern violin is the size of the bass bar (the piece of wood glued to the inside of the belly, beneath the bass foot of the bridge, to allow the belly to vibrate as a unit and to tune the air chamber to a specific pitch). Stradivari used a piece of pine that was

much smaller than that of today. It measured 214 mm (9½″) long, 6 mm (¼″) high in the center, and 4.7 mm (3/16″) thick. The modern bass bar, by contrast, introduced at the beginning of the nineteenth century, is about 273 mm (10¾″) long, 11 mm (7/16″) high at the center, and 6 mm (¼″) thick.

The scrolls of Stradivari's violins, generally shorter than those of other makers, are a key to identifying the exact period in which a particular Stradivari instrument was made. In violins from Stradivari's earlier periods, the beveling is not as flat; the fluting is deeper, the spiral is larger, the lower back of the scroll is more rounded, and the scroll has more of a tear-drop shape.

The interiors of Stradivari's violins serve as models to this day. Stradivari's construction methods were not original; they were the culmination of the methods used by instrument makers in Brescia and Cremona 200 years earlier. For the violin's blocks and linings (the strips of wood that edge the ribs for attaching the belly and back), Stradivari used willow. He usually inserted three nails through the neck block and into the base of the neck to help the neck stay in place. Modern makers mortise the base of the neck into the block.

For the exterior of his violins, Stradivari constructed a new mold for each change of model. He drew a design on paper, made a rough template of paper, made a template in wood, and then constructed the actual part. The molds were made from walnut planks that were about half an inch in thickness. Stradivari continually altered the molds by adding strips of wood or canvas when he wanted to change an outline. To keep track of the various parts that went into each model, Stradivari assigned the same letter or letters of the alphabet to the different parts—the molds, templates, designs—of the same instrument.

Stradivari achieved the desired thickness for the bellies and backs of his instruments by using calipers. He probably tap-tuned (tapped the wood with his hand to hear the tonal quality emitted) the backs and bellies, and then, depending on the quality of the sound, left them as they were, or made them thinner to improve the acoustic properties. Deciding factors for thickness may have been the rigidity of the particular piece of wood and its curvature. He used thicker backs and bellies in his earlier works, and thinner ones in his later works.

The purfling, which accentuates the outline and strengthens the edge, varied from instrument to instrument in thickness, distance from the edge, and the direction of the mitred joints. Modern instrument makers insert the purfling just after the outline is cut and the plate is roughly shaped; Stradivari inserted the purfling after the body of the instrument was glued together.

The soundholes are one of the most distinctive features of Stradivari's instruments, and perhaps best illustrate Stradivari's limitless creativity. There are hardly any examples of his work that have identical designs for the soundholes, because he infused each one with originality. To produce the soundhole, Stradivari used a compass and a template. The template was not used for the entire soundhole, as it is today. First he established the exact position he wanted for the top and bottom openings of the soundholes, using only a compass. Then he placed a template between the two holes and

traced the longitudinal opening. For the detailed curve of the soundhole—the wings and the curves of the upper and lower holes—Stradivari relied solely on his eye and on his steady hand. After the year 1720, the treble soundhole of many of Stradivari's instruments was higher than the bass one.

For the arching of his violins, it is unlikely that Stradivari used any elaborate fixtures; again, he relied on his keen eye to guide his carving tools. Some modern makers use arching templates as a guide.

The tailpieces usually were made from the same maple material as that of the fingerboard, and were decorated so that both parts matched.

His bridges also were made from leftover pieces of the maple slab used for the back. Stradivari made several different designs for his bridges, but they all were lower and more open than those of today, because the nonmetallic strings of that period were able to withstand the tension created by a higher bridge angle. The higher angle and the use of metallic strings provide for the greater instrumental power demanded by today's musicians.

The strings used in Stradivari's era were gut (the silver-wound G string was introduced after 1700, and steel strings were not introduced until the twentieth century). The lower tension did not necessarily mean lower pitch, but was a factor of the strings' thickness, stiffness, and mass.

Both pitch and the subsequent tension of the strings varied a great deal in Stradivari's era, from country to country and even from town to town. In the seventeenth century, it was common for two churches in the same town to have organs tuned to different pitches. Since the standard for A (now 440 Hz) was not established until well into the twentieth century, it is uncertain what tuning standard(s) Stradivari used to tune his instruments, or even the parts of his instruments (such as tuning the f-holes or tap-tuning the belly to the back, and so forth).

Although Stradivari's inlaid instruments are exquisite, he made very few of them. The custom of ornamenting instruments was common in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, when lutes and viols were being made. By the seventeenth century, only the instrument's fingerboards, tailpieces, pegs, and bridges continued to be decorated.

The Maker's Labels

On many of Stradivari's pre-1700 labels, his first name is spelled Antoni*n*s. This suggests that the person cutting or setting the type made an error in placing the letter "u" upside down—an error that Stradivari did not consider significant enough to correct, or possibly one that took too long to remedy. Until 1730, Stradivari always spelled his name with a rounded-bottom "V" as in Stradi*u*arius. He started to produce his own labels in the 1660s, and cut and printed three figures, "166—," from a single block. Stradivari wrote the additional number in with his pen. In the 1670s, Stradivari scratched out the second "6" with a knife, and wrote in the "7" and the next figure by hand. In the 1680s, he formed an "8" out of the second "6" by adding the top part. In the 1690s, he changed the second "6" into a nine by removing the top tail and placing it on the bottom circle part of the "6." In 1700 he used a new label that had thicker letters; he printed only the figure "1," and

added the remaining three digits with his pen. He made his last label change in 1730 by using even heavier characters for his name, and spelling his last name with a Roman "V," Stradivarius.

The monogram he used, his initials and a cross enclosed in a circle, were cut on separate wooden blocks—the initials on one and the cross and circle on another.

Most of his labels were placed on the inside belly against the lining of the ribs.

His Magical Varnish

By far, the most mystifying aspect of Stradivari's craftsmanship is the varnish he used on his instruments. In reality, the ingredients of that varnish were not his own, but rather were the ingredients used by his fellow craftsmen. Like every other luthier, Stradivari used his own proportions, and had his special methods and procedures of application. It is these elements, rather than the nature of the ingredients themselves, that have stumped researchers for more than 200 years.

Varnish often is considered to be one of the most important aspects of a violin's construction. It can either enhance or destroy an instrument's sound. Even with mediocre wood and construction, fine varnish can improve the quality of the instrument. On the other hand, if an instrument with fine wood and expert construction is covered with poor-quality varnish, an inferior sound will result.

In the flourishing violin-making center of Cremona, the basic ingredients for varnish hardly could be kept secret. Varnish had been widely used since the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, when lute and viol makers thrived in Cremona. These craftsmen used natural gums, oils, and vegetable colors, and probably learned of these ingredients from the great Italian painters of their time. The Hill brothers assert that "the materials he [Stradivari] used exist now, as in his day; but it will prove one problem to make the varnish, and quite another to utilize it with the perfect success of Stradivari."

The late Italian luthier Simone Sacconi agrees with this theory. In his book *I Segreti Di Stradivari*—"Secrets of Stradivari"—(Libreria Del Convegno, Cremona, 1972), Sacconi states that the composition of Stradivari's varnish is known, but that we know "nothing about the origin of the various raw materials used, and even less about the procedure of preparation. . . . What is commonly called the Cremonese varnish consists of substances composed absolutely differently from each other, with specific characteristics, applied to the instrument at different times and forming layers placed on top of each other and between which there is not even partial mixing through absorption."

Through extensive chemical analysis, Sacconi concluded that Stradivari's varnish is "the result of a stratified system of different compositions used at different times and in different ways." The different strata, he continues, are the "preparation substance," the varnish itself, and the coloring matter.

According to Sacconi, the preparation substance, probably applied with a sponge, consisted of a silicate of potassium and calcium. These substances hardened the wood and made it homogeneous. The hardness gave the wood better ability to vibrate. Due to the impermeability of the wood, caused

by this preliminary material, the varnish—applied later—maintained its transparency.

Before applying the real varnish, an isolating or sealing compound was applied to the instrument with a sponge, to make sure that the coloring substance, distributed in partical form throughout the varnish, would not change color when it came into contact with the preparative substance. The isolating compound was made from albumen (white of egg), gum arabic or cherry gum, honey, and candied sugar.

The real varnish was composed of propolis, a resinous balsam that bees extract from the buds of poplars; resin of larch turpentine; lavender oil; oil of turpentine; and ethyl alcohol. During his last period of work, Stradivari also added lac resins to the varnish.

Sacconi writes that the coloring agent "is never fused with the varnish but is always in the form of small particles distributed irregularly through it." The particles of color had to have an intense hue to be able to create a reflection strong enough to cover the entire mass. To further assure the isolation of the color from the preparation substance, Stradivari first applied a coat of varnish that had no coloring in it at all. He added color to the varnish for subsequent applications. Each succeeding coat was applied after the preceding one had dried.

Gradually, the use of oil varnish was abandoned. Even before Stradivari died, several makers resorted to the quicker-drying spirit varnish. The old Cremonese varnish was used until 1780–1784, by Giambattista Guadagnini. The use of spirit varnish, introduced after this period, paralleled the decline of the artistry of violin making in Italy (when commercialism took priority over art).

In the 1800s, one of Stradivari's descendents, Signor Giacomo Stradivari, found a Bible that had belonged to his renowned ancestor. When Giacomo opened it, he discovered that the recipe for the varnish had been written inside the front cover. The actual Bible later was destroyed, but Giacomo had made a copy of the recipe. However, despite the efforts of many scholars to obtain the recipe from him, Giacomo—apparently intent on keeping the formula a family secret—never revealed its content. It is unclear today whether a copy of the recipe still exists.

Stradivari's Bows

Although Stradivari is not known as a bow maker, among the relics of his work are designs for frogs (the tension-adjusting end of a bow) and for several bow tips. During his lifetime, there was a much greater variety of lengths, shapes, and weights of bows than there is today. Compared to the modern Tourte bow (developed by the famed French bow maker Francois Tourte, 1747–1835), the bow of Stradivari's day was lighter and shorter, and therefore generated less momentum. Since the Stradivari bow was less massive than the modern bow, the balance point was lower towards the frog.

In his book *The History of Violin Playing* (Oxford University Press, London, 1968), David Boyden points out some of the bow characteristics that had been achieved by Stradivari's day. "The Stradivari bow may be viewed as a triumph of bow making which represents not only the achievement of perfect balance, but also the culmination of certain tendencies that had long been dis-

cernible: namely, the straightening of the bow stick, the formation of a distinct bow head, and the development of a movable nut [frog] to facilitate tightening the hair at variable tensions. The bow head had been developing for some time; and by 1700, the approximate date of the Stradivari bow, its shape resembled a pike's head [pointed fish head]. This is a typical head of the early eighteenth-century bow. The hatchet [wedge-shaped] head of the modern bow did not appear until about fifty years later." Until close to the end of the seventeenth century, several different types of bows were used. In one type, the bow frog was unmovable and the hair was strung at fixed tension. Between 1650 and 1700 the dentated (toothed-frog) bow was developed. It had a movable frog that was held in one of several positions by engaging the iron catch over one of the teeth. The modern screw that moves the frog and adjusts the hair tension was invented towards the end of the seventeenth century.

In recent experiments, violinists have used early bows to play modern music and have found them to be superior in certain ways. It is easier to achieve clear playing of detached notes in the upper third of the bow. It is also easier to play triple stops because of the give of the bow hair. For playing percussive chords at the frog, however, the modern bow is more effective. Due to the length of the modern bow, it is also easier to play long, smooth melody lines.

The Music of the Period

The development of the violin during Stradivari's lifetime was tightly intertwined with the progression of music into a new period. Stradivari lived during the era in musical history known as the Baroque period, which lasted roughly from 1600 to 1750. During the preceding musical period, the Renaissance, the dominating music texture was four or more voices, which tended to be chordal. These lines could be sung or performed by almost any combination of voices or instruments. The most prevalent type of ensemble was an unaccompanied vocal ensemble, a cappella. In the Baroque period, instrumental and vocal styles began to be distinguished, and composers began to write for specific mediums, and often for solo instruments. Therefore, instruments with greater carrying power were needed.

In the early Baroque, new musical categories emerged: the *ricercare,* pieces characterized by continuous counterpoint; the *canzona,* pieces in non-continous counterpoint (different sections); the theme and variations; the suite, pieces in dance rhythms closely linked together; and the *toccata,* pieces written in an improvisational style for performance on keyboard or lute.

After 1630, the term *sonata* was used to designate separate instrumental compositions. In the Baroque sense, the sonata was a composition for a small group of instruments—usually two to four—that consisted of several sections. It also had the characteristic basso continuo—the bass line played by a clavier, organ, or lute and reinforced by a bass gamba or a cello.

After 1660 (when Stradivari was sixteen years old and apprenticing with Amati), two main types of sonatas became distinct. One was the *sonata da chiesa*, the church sonata, and the other was *sonata da camera,* chamber sonata, which was a collection of dance

music. After 1670 the *trio sonata* emerged and became the most popular musical style during the early Baroque period. It was essentially a sonata written for two violins and a continuo part. The name is sometimes misleading. The trio sonata consisted of three parts, but four players were necessary: two violinists, and two players for the basso continuo line (one played the cello or another string instrument, and the other played a keyboard instrument).

After 1700—the year that marked the beginning of Stradivari's Golden period—the solo sonata became popular. This was actually a piece for solo violin and continuo (a group of instruments). Besides the solo violin, small groups of instruments were also contrasted against a continuo. And there were pieces for a single instrument alone, which demanded that instruments have even greater power than before.

Another musical development that occurred towards the end of the seventeenth century was the distinction made between chamber music, music that contained one instrument per part, and orchestral music, music in which more than one instrument played the same part. In much of seventeenth-century music, circumstance, rather than the intent of the composer, dictated how many instruments would play a part. For example, if players were playing in a large hall, as many players as possible would play each part. In later periods, the number of performers per part became more standardized.

Composers and Artists of the Period

Italian chamber music was centered in Bologna around the church of San Petronio. Maurizio Cazzati (1620–1677) was the music director there from 1657 to 1671 and was an early writer of trio sonatas. Cazzati's student, G.B. Vitali, was also known for his sonatas.

The most well-known composer of sonatas during the early Baroque was Arcangelo Corelli (1653–1713). The violin parts in his trio sonatas are not technically demanding; the player never exceeds the third position. Fast runs and double stops also were avoided, although Corelli implemented those techniques in his solo sonatas. Corelli was among the first early Baroque composers to employ the use of the cadenza (an elaborate extension of the final cadence)—a form of ornamentation that grew even more popular in the late Baroque.

The Italian trio sonatas were adapted by composers in all countries from about 1700 to 1750. Other Italian sonata composers of the period were Francesco Geminiani (1687–1762), one of Corelli's students; Pietro Locatelli (1695–1764); and Giuseppe Tartini (1692–1770). The principal French composer of violin sonatas was Jean-Marie Leclair (1697–1764).

The concerto—the most important form of orchestral music in the Baroque after 1700, and the one most responsible for the development of instruments with more powerful tones—appeared in the last two decades of the seventeenth century. There were three principal forms. First was the orchestral concerto, an orchestral work of several movements that emphasized the first violin part and the bass. Then there was the concerto grosso, in which a small group of instruments was set against a larger orchestral body. Last, there was the solo concerto, in

which a single instrument was set against the backdrop of a large orchestral body. Giuseppe Torelli (1658–1709) was the most notable concerto composer around the turn of the century.

The chief Italian composer of concertos during the mature Baroque was Antonio Vivaldi (1678–1741). More than any other composer of the time, Vivaldi established the importance of the contrast between the solo instrument and the orchestral body. About two-thirds of Vivaldi's concertos are for one solo instrument with orchestra, and usually that instrument is a violin.

Italy, of course, was not the only country producing musical giants. In France, Jean-Philipe Rameau (1683–1764) became renowned for his operas and his theoretical treatises; in England, German-born George Frederick Handel (1685–1759) became famous for his great variety of orchestral and vocal music; and in Germany, there was Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750).

Stradivari's Growing Popularity

Throughout the eighteenth century, violinists preferred Amatis and Stainers (Jacob Stainer, 1617–1683, Tyrol, Austria) because the instruments of both makers had been available for some time; and in a sense, Stradivari's instruments were still new. The growth of popularity of Stradivari's instruments is largely attributed to violinist Giovanni Battista Viotti (1753–1824), who in the 1780s visited France and England, and dazzled audiences with the sound of his own Stradivari. It did not take long for the Stradivari craze to spread to other countries.

Shortly after the Viotti visit, Rev. Thomas Twining wrote a letter to a friend, in which he compared his Stradivari to his Stainer. A copy of that letter is presented in the Hill work. Wrote Twining, "I have got possession of a sweet Stradivari, which I play upon with much more pleasure than my Stainer, partly because the tone is sweeter, mellower, rounder. . . . If every bow that ever crossed its strings from its birth had been sugared instead of resined, more sweetness could not come out of its belly."

By the nineteenth century, that sentiment was widely shared. Many of the prominent string players of the day were using Stradivari's instruments. Twining, incidentally, was not the only English writer moved to superlatives by Stradivari. In the nineteenth century, English novelist George Eliot and American poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow were but two of many literary artists who expressed homage to the laudable craftsman. Longfellow wrote:

The instrument on which he played
Was in Cremona's workshop made,
By a great master of the past
Ere yet was lost the art divine;
Fashioned of maple and of pine
That in Tyrolean forests vast
Has rocked and wrestled with the blast;
Exquisite was it in design,
Perfect in each minutest part,
A marvel of the lutist's art;
And in its hollow chamber, thus,
The maker from whose hands it came
Has written his unrivalled name—
"Antonio Stradivarius."

By the twentieth century, prices began to skyrocket. Today, a Stradivari instrument in good condition is worth anywhere between $150,000 and $400,000 (some Stradivari violins, in poor condition, can be purchased

for less than $100,000), and concert artists such as Yehudi Menuhin, Pinchas Zukerman, and Itzhak Perlman sing their praises.

The Legacy of Stradivari

The mystery behind Antonio Stradivari is precisely that there is no mystery. Stradivari had the same resources as did the other craftsmen of his day. The materials he used were available to all. The ingredients of his varnish were the same as those used by the lute and viol makers in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. His construction methods had been tried and tested since the craft of instrument making began to flourish in Lombardy. He could not rely on special acoustic theory because there was little then to rely on. Yet, Stradivari's instruments remain to this day unsurpassed in beauty, design, tone, and construction.

Through each successive stage of his development—his Amatisé period, his Long period, and his Golden period—Stradivari developed, refined, and executed his artistic conceptions with relentless and masterful productivity.

Inspired by his predecessors, by the changing musical environment, and by his own irrepressible genius, Antonio Stradivari left to mankind a rare musical legacy and graced humanity with the supreme artistry of his work.

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La Scala: A Look behind the Legend

by Sorab K. Modi
Ovation
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It was a cold, grey, foggy January day, typical of the Milanese winter, some nineteen years ago. I stepped into one of the most respected of the world's great opera houses for the first time. The curtain was about to rise on *Falstaff*, the last opera written by Verdi, which in 1893 was given its world premiere in the Teatro alla Scala.

Stickers over the posters announced that the house was full—*Tutto Esaurito*. These words must have brought joy to the hearts of the black marketeers—*bagarinos*—who are always happy to sell you tickets at a markup of anything from 50 to 100%. The price varies according to the cast and can often exceed these figures.

The ushers—*maschere*—in their elegant black uniforms, white gloves, and huge medallions of La Scala dangling around their necks, greet you as you enter the foyer. A momentary glance around you and you realize how true is the oft heard remark, "you can't judge a book by its cover." Outside, if you were looking for an ornate facade like that of the Palais Garnier or the Staatsoper, chances are you would pass by the smoky greyish-yellow boxy facade without noticing it. Inside, it is glorious. Marble, chandeliers, and the marble busts of Rossini, Verdi, Donizetti, Toscanini, and other greats overwhelm the eyes. The public often arranges to meet during the intermission using the phrase "see you at Verdi or Rossini."

The horseshoe-shaped auditorium with its near-perfect acoustics is the most beautiful imaginable. Gold and burgundy red dominate the scene, and overhead is the Murano chandelier with some 362 lamps. Perhaps the most ethereal moments are those serenely beautiful seconds between the dimming of the house lights and the start of the music. For those few seconds just the very dimmest glow illuminates every box. La Scala begins to work its magic. In those few seconds of near darkness, the atmosphere seems charged and pulsates with anticipation.

The evening was one of undiluted joy, and as I walked out into the wintery night, there was a sense of unreality about the experience. I felt a dazed feeling of wonderment. But there were questions—what *is* La Scala? What is its magic? What is it that makes it so special? The myth had to be explored, the legend unravelled and the living reality discovered.

La Scala's story begins on February 25, 1776. The Grand Carnival Ball had barely ended when a fire erupted in the Grande Salle of the Teatro Regio Ducale. It soon enveloped the entire theater and left it in ashes. In those ashes lay a memorable past; the very heart of Milan lay in ruins. The Regio was the city's grand salon. Within its walls

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deals were made, marriages arranged, elopement plans laid, and the whispered gossip of the previous evening was often the next day's news. It was at the Regio that three Mozart operas, *Mitridate, Ascanio in Alba*, and *Lucio Silla,* received their world premieres.

After only twelve days, a group of ninety box-holders who were the real owners of the old theater decided to build a new one. Milan at that time was under Austrian domination and hence permission had to be sought from Empress Maria Theresia. This was granted. The Empress offered the wealthy Milanese nobility the deed and the land for the construction of "a new opera house destined to obscure the most celebrated theaters in Italy." The site chosen was that of the recently deconsecrated church of Santa Maria della Scala, a church built in the late fourteenth century by Regina della Scala. Piermarini was appointed the architect and work started in late summer of 1776.

In the initial stages of the digging, a workman turned up a sculptured head, identified as that of the Roman mime Pilades. It was evidence that the site was in centuries past one associated with theater. What better omen could have greeted the birth of the new theater? Construction went on at a feverish pace, and after an acoustic test in May 1778, the Nuovo Teatro Regio Ducale opened its doors for the first time on August 3 with *Europa Riconosciuta* by Antonio Salieri, among other works.

To the opera lover of today who considers La Scala as the temple of the art, it may come as a shock to know that in its early days the theater was but an extension of the salons of the rich. The horseshoe design really bore out Shakespeare's famous line, "All the world's a stage." It gave everybody a chance to see and be seen by everybody else. The real show took place in every corner of the theater. The boxes, which were emblazoned with the crest of the families that owned them, had a back room where cooks busily prepared *arrosto, risotto,* etc. What is today the *platea* was reserved for the servants and the military.

Exactly when the Nuovo Teatro Regio became La Scala is difficult to determine, but it is this name that it has borne for decades and bears today.

The big five of Italian opera—Rossini, Donizetti, Bellini, Verdi, and Puccini—have all been closely connected with its history. On Sept. 26, 1812, Rossini's *La Pietra del Paragone* became his first opera to be performed at La Scala. The critic of *La Gazzetta Piemontese* wrote, "The beautiful musical phrases of this genial Italian enter so easily into the ear of the listener." In 1822 Donizetti's name appeared at La Scala for the first time with *Chiara e Serafina.* In the years ahead, five of his nearly seventy operas were premiered at the Milan theater. Bellini's debut was in 1827 with *Il Pirata.* (*Norma* came in 1831.) Between 1830 and 1840, seven Bellini operas were given 215 performances.

1839 marks Verdi's first association with the theater which will always be closely linked with his name. The opera *Oberto* was a mild success. His 1840 *Un Giorno di Regno* was a complete flop, but his next opera, *Nabucco,* mounted in 1842, was an instant hit.

Puccini's *Le Villi,* with some thirteen

performances in 1885, marked the Tuscan master's entry into La Scala.

One of the greatest names that will always mean La Scala is that of Arturo Toscanini. In 1896 he mounted the podium at La Scala for the first time. It was Toscanini who took the daring step in 1898 to open a season not with an Italian opera but with *Die Meistersinger*. (The 1981–82 season is scheduled to open with Claudio Abbado conducting *Lohengrin*.)

It is important, however, to remember the particular extra-musical role La Scala played and still plays in the private lives of the citizens. The strangest thing that happened to La Scala is that the institution somehow got propelled into the political arena. In its early days it was a private club to which people went night after night to gamble (there was a casino), to gossip more than to listen to the music. The profits of the casino helped run the theater. A 1798 account of the goings-on in the theater reads, "The spectators downstairs are either crazy or drunk. One hears less noise at a fish market." The Austrian overlords permitted the reconstruction of the Regio in haste so that the Milanese could enjoy themselves and thus stay away from political involvement.

La Scala seemed the most suitable place for quick and uncontrollable uprisings, expressing the will and spirit of the people. One of these demonstrations took place in 1859 on the eve of the Second War of Independence. The opera being performed was *Norma*. The atmosphere was tense. In the first rows and in the reserved boxes sat the Austrian officers in their uniformed glory. News of a significant speech by Victor Emanuel was circulating in the boxes and the orchestra seats. War seemed imminent, war that would bring freedom to the Milanese. At the point in the opera when the Druids sing their chorus *"Guerra, guerra,"* the audience jumped to its feet waving kerchieves in the national colors and shouting *"Guerra, guerra"*—"War, war." The Austrians present got the message: they decided to leave the theater in silence. Even the shout *"Viva Verdi!"* acquired a political overtone. The Italians are fond of acronyms and "Viva Verdi" came to signify Viva *V*(ittorio) *E*(manuele) *R*(e) *D'I*(talia).

The night of August 15, 1943, was perhaps the darkest in the history of the Teatro alla Scala. Saturation bombing of Milan left much of the city devastated, La Scala included. The theater's entire resources— archives, costumes, scenery, and props of over 100 operas—were destroyed. The war ended in the first days of May 1945, and on May 9 the musicians and chorus of La Scala played their first concert, mainly for the victorious Allied forces. With liberation came the task of reconstruction of the devastated city. The Milanese knew their priorities. By May 1946 the Teatro alla Scala was rebuilt to the original architectural designs of Piermarini and Sanquirico. Even as the work was going on, the slogan *"Vogliamo Toscanini"* began appearing on the walls of Milan, and it was to him that fell the task of inaugurating the reconstructed theater on May 11, 1946. At 79, the maestro returned to the city and country he had quit, as a protest against Fascism, in 1929.

From 1946 to this year, its 203rd season, La Scala proudly carries on its tradition. The impact of world events has always been felt in this theater more than in almost any other

musical institution. With the launching of the Industrial Revolution, Milan was transformed from a city of some 300,000 in 1870 to an industrialized giant of almost 900,000 by 1880. With it came problems of social change and tension, problems that seem to dog Italy even today.

In 1972, La Scala's administration realized the direction that the future should take. La Scala had to go to the people. Their commitment was to offer La Scala's artistic and organizational resources to the city and the *Provincia* to develop a dialogue with students, workers, etc. Former Artistic Director Claudio Abbado does not believe that music can exist solely on absolute and eternal values. The proper utilization of music is as important to him as its proper interpretation.

Today La Scala offers special concerts *"per lavoratori"*—for workers. The base of its audience is ever widening. It undertakes performances in the province of Lombardy, in factories and industrial establishments. Remember that La Scala is not just opera but a totality of music. It has a fine orchestra, a ballet company, chamber groups, etc.

La Scala took another step in its efforts to bring music to the people when, in the late 1970s, it started relaying concerts with superb hi-fi equipment into the Piazza della Scala.

The Milanese audiences concede their operatic pride of place as arbiters of the tradition of opera only to nearby Parma, where both Verdi and Toscanini were born. All singers are terrified of the enthusiastic but tough and critical audiences. If they like you, they love you. If they don't they just sit on their hands and vocally express their disapproval. La Scala may be the only theater in the world where if something goes musically wrong, hissing and booing will fill the vast auditorium. Not just that, there have also been instances when shoes and program books have been flung on stage.

No one can fool a La Scala galleries audience. They have proclaimed themselves the keepers and guardians of the operatic tradition. They are today as demonstrative, expressive, and passionate as ever in the 203-year history of the Teatro. They are musically prepared and alert opera buffs, authorities on the art of singing. These *"Amici del Loggione"* mainly inhabit the uppermost galleries. Their presence, more than that of the critics, sends a chill of mortal fear down every singer's throat. Their approval is what many singers seek. Without them, they feel, La Scala would be just another theater where audiences would applaud everything. They sit in judgment and thus uphold standards. The critics, too, seem to judge La Scala performances very strictly. When questioned why they are so tough on La Scala, the answer one gets is generally, "But after all, this is La Scala." Small wonder, then, that the recently-issued 1929 recording of *The Barber of Seville* is an example of uncompromising excellence.

La Scala is Milan and Milan is La Scala. It is not just a building; it is an idea, a way of life, a tradition of music-making and the bringing of that tradition to the people who know it, love it, and nurture it. La Scala is the rigorous custodian of the great values of the past and alert witness to the authentic values of modernity. "It is theater tied to the history of yesteryear, today, and tomorrow, a theater proudly committed to the defense of artistic values, a theater intimately bound

up with the new social reality." So wrote the late Paolo Grassi in the foreword to Lorenzo Arruga's book on La Scala (published in 1976 by Praeger, New York). Grassi concludes, "Only time will tell whether we have been able concretely to defend the presuppositions of our work, whether La Scala of the 1980s will be the just and rightful living heir of two centuries of our institution's history."

Remembering Stravinsky

by Stuart Isacoff
Keyboard Classics
September--October, 1981

In 1944 Igor Stravinsky—perhaps the most influential composer of this century—was invited by Broadway producer Billy Rose to write the music for a major show; the result was a suite of dances entitled *Scenes de Ballet*. After the out-of-town preview opened in Philadelphia, the organizers sent Stravinsky a telegram: YOUR MUSIC GREAT SUCCESS STOP COULD BE SENSATIONAL IF YOU WOULD AUTHORIZE ROBERT RUSSELL BENNETT RETOUCH INSTRUMENTATION STOP BENNETT ORCHESTRATES EVEN THE WORKS OF COLE PORTER STOP. Stravinsky quickly wired back: SATISFIED WITH GREAT SUCCESS.

Stravinsky's music—despite critics, changing trends, and the passage of time—is still a great success. This year musicians around the world are celebrating what would have been Stravinsky's (1882–1971) one hundredth birthday with concerts, recordings, and publications. This September in New York the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center is holding a small Stravinsky festival—the first of many such programs sure to grace the performance calendars of cultural centers and colleges throughout the season.

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The Lincoln Center festival, whose participants will include conductors Leonard Bernstein and Michael Tilson Thomas, along with composer Ned Rorem and other stellar artists, is actually a Haydn-Stravinsky celebration. (Next year will be the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of Haydn's birth as well.)

"When I first called Leonard Bernstein to see if he might be able to participate," says Charles Wadsworth, artistic director of the Chamber Music Society, "he said, 'You know, you have hit on one of my favorite pairings for programing: Haydn and Stravinsky.' It's just some of the most beautiful music to put together. There are some similarities in the economy of means, in the sense of humor, and in the clarity of writing used by these two composers, and at the same time you have the obvious differences because of when they each lived. It was this combination that brought Bernstein into the picture.

"But the most exciting aspect," relates Wadsworth, "is that we have an occasion to perform one of the biggest, most important works in all of the two-piano repertoire—the Stravinsky Concerto for Two Solo Pianos—with Leonard Bernstein and Michael Tilson Thomas at the pianos!"

The excitement is not Wadsworth's alone. For Bernstein, Thomas, and others, the experience of meeting Stravinsky and of working with his music has exerted an immeasurable influence.

Michael Tilson Thomas is, at age thirty-six, a conductor of international reputation. He first played for Stravinsky when he was seventeen, during a rehearsal of Monteverdi's *Vespers*. "I played the conti-

nuo part," says Thomas. "Later on, I performed other works for him, like the Beethoven Sonata, opus 111. He liked it, but said he was more interested in the invention of Beethoven's late string quartets."

Thomas grew up in Los Angeles and studied with Ingol Dahl, who served as an assistant to Stravinsky in the forties and fifties. He first heard Stravinsky perform at age ten, and even then he found himself "soaking in that wonderfully precise kind of approach." Observing Stravinsky conduct at recording sessions with the Columbia Symphony Orchestra, Thomas found him to be a "superb interpreter of his own music. His conducting was very expressive. He was able to get just the kind of angular and precise quality he wanted, yet he never actually counted anything to the orchestra! He made gestures and let out moans, grunts, and gasps—the kind of thing one could associate with peasant dance and song.

"Much has been made of analyzing Stravinsky's work in terms of cells and blocks," says Thomas, "but it all comes from the tree of Russian folk music. Even in his abstract music (with abrupt changes of meter, for instance), there was an organic, dance-rooted quality. He had an unfailing sense of just the right kind of 'stomp'—the right 'twist of the hand.' "

"No one can avoid the fact that Stravinsky has been the biggest influence on everyone since 1910," says Pulitzer Prize-winning composer Ned Rorem, who will give a lecture on Stravinsky as part of the Lincoln Center activities. "There isn't anyone who is untouched by him—not even the check-out girl at the Food City down the street. No man is an island away from Stravinsky.

"So I thought it would be fun to talk about the people Stravinsky himself had stolen from. For example, the opening of *The Nightingale* is almost a note-for-note steal from *Nuages* by Debussy, which in turn is stolen from a song cycle of Mussorgsky. The second aria from *Oedipus Rex* is stolen from the big tenor aria in Verdi's *Requiem*. The whole *Petrushka*, sound of two clarinets playing in seconds was used by Ravel in *Rapsodie Espagnol*, six years earlier. Stravinsky would not have written *Petrushka* quite the way it was done if it had not been for that piece.

"So Stravinsky was not completely original the way Schoenberg was. He evolved, and sometimes he evolved full grown from other people. But everything he stole he would fashion in such a way that it was Stravinsky."

When Stravinsky reworked older material, it became something so new that even the composer himself became confused at times over where the other left off and Stravinsky began. "I was at a party with Stravinsky at composer Arthur Berger's house in the forties," remembers pianist Leo Smit, "and I spoke to him about his work *The Fairy's Kiss*, which was written to mark the thirty-fifth anniversary of Tchaikovsky's death—the melodic motifs are taken from Tchaikovsky's works. I asked Stravinsky where the source was in Tchaikovsky's music for the theme (in *The Fairy's Kiss*) of the fortune-telling gypsy. 'Oh,' he replied, 'I wrote it myself.' But years later I discovered the tune in a song by Tchaikovsky called *Oh Pain, Oh Pleasure*—only it was changed from A to A minor!"

Ned Rorem spent many years in Europe, where Stravinsky was a larger-than-life figure to his contemporaries. "The only time our names were ever connected," remembers Rorem, "was in Rome in 1954. There was a festival of contemporary music, and they were doing Henze's opera, *Boulevard Solitude*. Those were different days from now, and you were supposed to wear black tie when you attended the opera. Well, I wasn't dressed properly, and neither was Stravinsky nor his assistant, conductor Robert Craft.

"The usher said to Stravinsky, 'Oh, anyone can see you're Stravinsky, go on in.' But he wouldn't let me in, nor Craft. Nicholas Nabokov, who was in charge of the festival, became so angry at this that he hit the usher, knocking him to the floor. The next day, all the newspapers carried the story that Stravinsky refused to go into the opera because two young musicians, Rorem and Craft, were kept out."

This side of Stravinsky's nature—the generous gesture toward younger musicians—is not as well publicized as his self-pampering and his concern with material possessions. At age sixteen, Leo Smit was working as pianist for the American Ballet under choreographer Georges Balanchine. When Stravinsky arrived to rehearse one of his works, Smit helped with lights, dancers' cues, and in every other way he could. At the end, Stravinsky turned to him and said: "You are worth *beaucoup d'argents* (much money)!"

"Stravinsky has been described as being too money conscious," says Smit, "but I have a different perspective about that. I once had dinner with him in Rome, and when the bill came I was amazed to see Stravinsky take out a stack of 1-lire notes, which were pinned together, and begin counting them. At that time 1 lire was worth about a sixth of a penny, yet he sat there counting each one!

"To me, it seemed as if he were counting sixty-fourth notes in music—they are small in value but important. I think he took great care because he respected the value of each note. It's similar to the way he spent so much time on each note in his scores!"

Stravinsky yearned for acceptance. "He was angry and impatient with modern audiences," relates Michael Tilson Thomas. "Stravinsky was always most interested in his current writing, but people were always telling him that his music was not as good as what he had written earlier."

Smit remembers several instances that bear out his need to be appreciated. "I once asked Stravinsky what his concert schedule was going to be for the season, and he listed several large cities. Suddenly his eyes lit up and he exclaimed: 'Then, I'm going to perform at the Hollywood Bowl. I'm with the Beatles!'

"For Stravinsky, that was exhilarating. He was hurt by those who were critical. He spoke with considerable frustration about Arnold Schoenberg, for example. Stravinsky had always extended a hand toward Schoenberg, even though they wrote very different kinds of music. But Schoenberg was rejecting. At one point when Schoenberg attacked *The Fairy's Kiss*, Stravinsky cried out: "After all, my *Kiss* is not joke!' At another time, he complained: 'Masters should recognize each other.'

"Perhaps the most telling incident,

though, occurred in Rome in the fifties, when Stravinsky was conducting the St. Cecilia Orchestra. He asked for an audience with the Pope and received a reply to come the next day at twelve. Stravinsky was at first upset that the rehearsal schedule would not permit him time to change before the meeting. But the Pope sent word that he should come as he is.

"The following day they met. After about an hour, the Pope put his hand on Stravinsky's arm and said: 'Tell me, my son, what troubles you?' 'I'm ashamed to confess to you, Holy Father,' he replied, 'that I cannot bear adverse criticism.' The Pope thought for a moment, and said: 'I have the same difficulty.' According to Stravinsky, for the rest of that meeting they sat commiserating with each other!"

The current perspective is more favorable than that of the past. Stravinsky's music, wrote Leonard Bernstein in *The Unanswered Question,* is "like Schubert songs or Mozart piano concertos: whichever one you're hearing is the greatest one of all. You listen to the *Symphony of Psalms:* of course it's his greatest work—maybe the greatest of the century. But then listen to *Le Sacre*—same thing. Ah, but *Oedipus Rex;* what about *Threni?* You forgot *L'Histoire du Soldat!* They're all the greatest."

Even without retouching by Robert Russell Bennett!

The Stravinsky–Diaghilev Foundation

by Nancy Shear
Keyboard Classics
September–October, 1981

Serge Diaghilev (1872–1929), as impressario of the famed Ballet Russes (1909–1929), was the catalyst for many legendary productions. It was part of Diaghilev's genius to recognize and stimulate the best in other, lesser-known artists, including composers, painters, designers, writers, and choreographers. Igor Stravinsky was just such an artist when Diaghilev "discovered" him in 1909. He wrote the *Firebird* the following year; it was the first of the three "great" Stravinsky ballets, with *Petrushka* and the *Rite of Spring* soon to follow.

The amount of material generated by these two extraordinary men is awesome, and it is the task of the Stravinsky-Diaghilev Foundation to preserve, collect, and organize it. Never before have so many treasures from this period been made accessible by one central source. Holdings to date include musical manuscripts, collections of choreographic notation, original stage set and costume designs, newspaper clippings, photographs, and more than 15,000 documents and autographs.

Nancy Shear is a freelance writer and radio personality who specializes in musical subjects. © 1981 by *Keyboard Classics*. All rights reserved. Used with permission.

It is ironic that such an important and massive effort as the formation of the Foundation came about circuitously, even accidentally. Around 1970, Parmenia Migel Ekstrom, a well-known author and dance historian, was working under pressure of a deadline on the galleys of a new book when a friend called, demanding that she come immediately to his home. With one eye on her work, she declined. But his continued efforts of persuasion could not have been stronger. "If you do not come now, you will regret it for the rest of your life!" he announced. "What woman could resist that?" replied Mrs. Ekstrom. Off she went.

In his home were massive crates containing the personal correspondence and business materials of Serge Diaghilev and the Ballet Russes. Within three hours, a caravan of taxis was moving from his home to hers, bearing the priceless documentation of a bygone era.

Not long after this, Mrs. Ekstrom was approached by members of a committee to help save and preserve water-threatened monuments in Venice. Realizing that both Stravinsky and Diaghilev were buried there (next to each other, according to Stravinsky's wishes), she suggested the creation of a museum devoted to the two men, through which funds could be raised. Mrs. Stravinsky became involved and, until her recent illness, was active in many aspects of the Foundation's development.

After some time it became clear that New York would provide the best location for the collection. Though the search is still on for a suitable headquarters, the materials are made available to interested researchers.

Access to the Foundation's holdings is

granted to persons with serious projects who write (do not call!) to 525 East 85th Street, New York, NY 10028. Previous projects have resulted in some incredible finds, such as the time scholar-detectives mended together torn pieces of paper to yield the name of a Diaghilev associate—who was later contacted through the London telephone directory!

The Pianist as Vocal Accompanist: Servant or Partner?

by Judith Solomon
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I find it interesting that page 9 of Webster's *New World Dictionary* reads

"Accompany: v.t. 1. to send with; add to; supplement: as, accompany words with acts.
2. to go with; be together with; attend.
3. in music, to play or sing an accompaniment for or to.
v.i. to perform a musical accompaniment; be an accompanist."

Then, under Synonyms, we read: "Accompany means to go or be together with as a companion, associate, attribute, etc., and usually connotes equality of relationship."[1]

And it is also interesting that on pages 8 and 9 of another dictionary, Willi Apel's *Harvard Dictionary of Music,* the word "accompaniment" is defined as:

"The musical background provided by a less important for a more important part. For instance, in piano music, the chords or other subsidiary material of the left hand, as against the melody of the right hand. The term also refers to the support given to a soloist (singer, violinist) by a pianist or an orchestra. The auxiliary role of the accompaniment frequently leads to an underestimation of its musical and artistic importance, on the part of the soloist as well as the audience. Vocalists, especially, are inclined to demand an undue subordination of their accompanists, condemning them to complete slavery in questions of interpretation, of tempo, of dynamics, etc."[2]

There seems to be a definite discrepancy here. Webster says that "accompany" denotes equality of relationship. Willi Apel, on the other hand, says that "accompaniment" is the less important background stuff that supports a more important solo part. I am not sure about the exact reason for this discrepancy between English definition and musical usage, but it does seem that a poor attitude concerning the role and status of the accompanist has existed for centuries.

As early as 1716, Francois Couperin, in *L'Art de Toucher le Clavecin,* revealed his bitter feelings about playing accompaniments. He wrote "But what injustice! The accompanist is the last to be praised at concerts. The . . . accompaniment on these occasions is considered only the foundation, although it supports the whole building. It is hardly ever mentioned. Instead, whoever excels in the solos enjoys the entire attention and applause of his audience."[3] And C.P.E. Bach, J.S. Bach's second son, echoed some of these same sentiments a few years later in Part Two of his famous *Essay on the True Art of Playing Keyboard Instruments*, which dates from 1762. He wrote, ". . . only through a good accompaniment [will the soloist's performance] be brought to life . . . yet the soloist takes all bravos to himself and

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gives no credit to his accompanist . . . ignorant custom directs these bravos to him alone."[4]

Even Gerald Moore, probably the world's most famous accompanist, who is credited with starting a campaign to change the image of the accompanist and elevate the profession to respectability, reflected feelings of inferiority associated with the accompanist role in the titles of two of his early books, *The Unashamed Accompanist* (1943) and *Am I Too Loud?* (1963), although surely he knew even the uninitiated reader would appreciate the irony of these titles.

On the other hand, the titles of some articles and books dating from the past fifteen years or so seem to reveal a new attitude toward accompanying: "Accompanists Share in Greatness," *Music Journal,* 1972; "Artur the Accompanist or From Hired Hand to Partner," The *New York Times,* 1971; "The Art of Accompanying," The *NATS Bulletin,* October 1968; *Art of Accompanying and Coaching,* by Kurt Adler, 1965.

Not too long ago, many concert pianists of the virtuoso category would have resented being asked to accompany a singer in, for example, "simple" Schubert lieder. Today, recital notices in the *New York Times* and record jackets in a local store announce that Ashkenazy, Barenboim, Bernstein, Demus, de la Roccha, Eschenbach, Ohlssohn, Previn, and other big-name, big-time pianists are sharing the stage with singers, and with other instrumentalists.

Although according to Webster, the term "accompany" indicates equality of relationship, the word "accompanist" has always implied something demeaning, and apparently I'm not the only one who suffers from these feelings of paranoia. (Remember Couperin, C.P.E. Bach, and the *Harvard Dictionary.)* "Accompanist" seems such a neuter term. We don't differentiate between a solo (or recital) violinist and an orchestral violinist, so why must we consider the piano accompanist a different species from the regular solo pianist? Actually, I suppose it's because the piano (along with the organ and harpsichord) is really the only true solo instrument. Most often when we speak of hearing a solo voice or solo violin recital, we are really not referring to a singer or violinist performing all alone on the stage, but in fact to a singer or violinist accompanied by a pianist, as differentiated from a singer or violinist accompanied by an orchestra. To call such a performance with a pianist a "solo" vocal or violin recital is to ignore completely or to deny the existence of the piano accompanist.

There are even those who imply that playing as a pianist in a trio or quartet—a chamber music situation—has a higher status, and is therefore a more important endeavor than merely accompanying a single singer, or violinist, or flutist. Actually, this is a case of reverse psychology, as even C.P.E. Bach recognized when he wrote, "The fewer the parts in a piece, the finer must be its accompaniment."

But it is encouraging to note that these days there are some pianists choosing to devote their careers to accompanying: Americans like Artur Balsam, Martin Katz, Samuel Sanders, Brooks Smith, and John Wustman, who have achieved some real degree of success in this country; and others like Dalton Baldwin, Irwin Gage, Michael

Isador, and Norman Shetler who sought and found their accompanying careers in Europe. And more and more, there seems to be a generation of distinguished piano soloists who are beginning to be more interested in music than in themselves, who are rushing to accompany, to play chamber music, to experience all areas of the musical world. All this must prove that there are many satisfactions and advantages to be gained by sharing the spotlight with someone else.

In this age of practicality, when career choice and preparation begin early, don't we as teachers owe it to our students to introduce them to the joys of ensemble playing early in their musical lives? If they choose to make accompanying their careers, they will find that well-prepared accompanists often find many more musical doors open to them than do the more limited solo pianists. If not a career choice, we still should encourage our students to round out their musical study by developing the special skills that will allow them to share in the added musical experiences available to the piano accompanist.

The pianist who accompanies singers must have all the abilities and techniques of the solo pianist, plus some additional skills.

To begin, there are the necessary pianistic or technical skills.

Complete command or control of the keyboard is necessary, that is, the means to translate feelings and expression into sound. There may be fewer virtuosic double-octave passages in song accompaniments than in solo piano music, but anyone who has played, say, Schubert's "Erlkönig," knows that accompaniments may demand as much sheer technical ability as solo piano music—ability that the vocal accompanist must have.

But technique means much more than being able to play loud and fast. It includes the all-important areas of touch and tone. Perhaps even more than the solo pianist, vocal accompanists must be able to produce a wide range of tone qualities and articulations. During the course of a recital, the piano soloist may need to imitate a guitar (Granados: *Andaluza*); play a spinning song (Mendelssohn: Song Without Words op. 67, No. 4); conjure up visions of a capricious goldfish playing in sunlit water (Debussy: *Poissons d'or*). On the other hand, within the space of a fifteen-minute group of Schubert songs, the vocal accompanist may be called on to play like the plucked strings of a guitar (*Ständchen*); suggest the whir of a spinning wheel (*Gretchen am Spinnrade*); portray the playfulness of a trout gliding through rippling waters (*Die Forelle*). All of which proves, if proof is needed, that music is music, and "accompaniment" music is not always very different from solo piano music.

Dynamics should also be included under technical skills. The vocal accompanist must have a particularly wide palette of dynamic shadings, and must have the intelligence to know when to use which. Dynamics are relative, and they depend greatly on acoustical circumstances: on the size and makeup of the room (whether it's heavily carpeted or draped), on the particular piano, and—a very important point—on the singer's vocal range and volume (e.g. a high soprano voice cuts through a thickly written piano part much more effectively than does a rich baritone voice).

But it's not enough merely to size up a singer's general carrying quality before going on stage. Each song must be studied for places in which it may be necessary to play more softly if the piano part is written particularly thickly at some point, or if the vocal part is in the same general range as the piano in some places, or if the vocal part doubles one of the piano lines occasionally, or if there is a place in the song that requires the singer to use an especially weak part of his voice.

On the other hand, accompanists must be able to play with a full enough sound to "support" the singer where appropriate, and to project enough to carry out the composer's intentions in introductions, interludes, and postludes when playing alone. If the pianist is constantly asking himself, "Am I too loud?", chances are that he is too soft and mousy. In the final analysis, appropriate dynamics are matters of proportion. When playing solo pieces, the concern is to balance the left hand against the right hand, to make sure whatever melody that is supposed to be heard does indeed come through. When playing a song, the concern is to balance the left hand against the right hand, as well as the two hands against the singer's voice; instead of a left-hand—right-hand "duet" situation, it's a left-hand—right-hand—voice "trio," a much more involved setting. Balance of sound between singer and pianist is primarily the responsibility of the pianist.

Two final necessary elements of piano technique involve rhythm and tempo. An impeccable sense of rhythm is necessary to keep the song alive and the singer interested in singing. An unfailing memory for the correct tempo must help the accompanist start the song at the speed agreed upon in rehearsal, but he must also be flexible enough to adjust a tempo during performance if the singer seems to want to take things a bit faster or slower than usual, or suddenly needs to breathe in new places.

Flexibility is also needed when the singer has long notes, in which case a little faster movement under them can increase the singer's confidence. A finely attuned sense of rubato eases the situation when the singer has a particularly large leap to execute, or when the singer wishes to emphasize an important word or thought. And when it comes to individual words and matters of time, the piano attacks should be timed to coincide with the singer's vowels rather than with their consonants. This skill is important in all languages, but is particularly noticeable in German songs where there are often multiple thick consonants to be spat out before getting to a vowel that can carry a tone, e.g. *schmerz, schlummer, spricht.*

But piano technique is only effective if backed up by thorough musicianship. Accompanists must have a thorough knowledge of music theory (both harmony and counterpoint), of form and analysis, of ear-training, and of style and interpretation. It's not much of a secret that an experienced accompanist is usually as good a musician or often a lot better than the singer being accompanied. There are many singers who began their careers because of the natural beauty of their voices, but who have little musical intelligence to guide them in how to use their talent. I doubt that there are many singers who have succeeded as operatic stars or lieder specialists only because of sheer vocal

beauty; nevertheless, the accompanist is often called upon to act as a coach—to help the singer learn the vocal line, to correct pronunciations, to suggest phrasings, and even to interpret. So mastering the piano accompanist is not enough; it is also necessary to know and to be able to teach the vocal part.

Just how important is each of these areas of musicianship?

Harmony and counterpoint: A study of the basic chord progressions is necessary to recognize the tensions and relaxations in the music, to identify cadence points (in all their various types and strengths), these cadences providing the punctuation points that set off the phrases one from another and delineate the formal outlines of the musical structure. The identification of chords is an invaluable aid to reading music, and accompanists often write in a Roman-numeral chord symbol below the bass line to prompt themselves during the stress of performance. Some knowledge of counterpoint is important in order to recognize which inner lines of the piano part should be brought out to complement or imitate the vocal part.

Form and analysis: An understanding of the broad structural outlines of a piece of music, and an awareness of the thematic versus the non-thematic sections, are invaluable aids, really prerequisites, to intelligent interpretation. Pre-rehearsal study and analysis are also necessary to help decide which lines should be brought out by whom, or by which hand. The piano accompanist is not always or even often just "accompaniment," and careful analysis is necessary to reveal the proportions or perspectives of the situation—what is foreground, middle-ground, or background.

Ear-training: A well-trained ear is needed to catch any incorrect pitches produced by the singer. Moreover, even the most well-trained and experienced singer may sometimes suffer a memory lapse, and skip a phrase, or a verse. A well-trained ear will immediately catch what has happened and perhaps allow the accompanist to save the situation, even while breaking into a cold sweat. (And although it would be delightful for the following day's newspaper headline to read "Pianist Geraldine Lesser Saves the Day as Soprano Victoria Callas Rewrites Schubert," Geraldine Lesser will probably have to be content with a quiet, slightly smug sense of pleasure felt privately.)

Style and interpretation: The wise, well-prepared accompanist aims to become a master of all musical styles, unlike the piano soloist who can choose to make a career playing one portion of the repertoire. Most often, it is the singer who decides upon the program; hence, the more well-versed accompanists are in styles, and the larger the repertoire they are known to have at their fingertips, the more desirable, the more sought after they become as professional accompanists.

Technique and musicianship are areas in which the ensemble pianist, as well as the solo pianist, is constantly striving to excel. There are, however, other areas that are of much more concern to the accompanist than to the solo pianist. The accompanist must develop special skills in languages, sight-reading, transposition, multiple staff reading, orchestration, attitude, and rehearsal and stage skills.

Languages: Often the accompanist's job

goes beyond merely playing the piano. In some cases, the accompanist may be called upon to coach the singer in diction and pronunciation, especially in foreign languages. So even though most editions of songs these days come with English translations, a year or two of study in at least French, German, and Italian are advisable for the aspiring young vocal accompanist. Accompanists do not need to know how to think in the language, but should be thoroughly familiar with the pronunciation and meaning of the words of songs being sung in order to be able to assist singers in both pronunciation and interpretation.

English translations that go along with the score are fine for getting a bird's-eye view of the tone or mood of the song, but the English words are often ill-chosen, with rhyming purposes taking precedence over exact meanings. Only by understanding the correct syntax of the foreign language, and by being familiar with that language's inflections and accents can accompanists effectively aid singers in bringing the words of the poet to life. No accompanist should be presumptuous enough to play a song accompaniment without a thorough knowledge of the text. Gerald Moore's horror story of hearing an accompanist tear into Hugo Wolf's song *Bitt ihn, O Mutter,* thinking that the title meant "O Mother, Bite Him," when in fact it means "Beg Him, O Mother," should be a warning to all accompanists who think they are too busy to bother with the meaning of the words.[5]

Sight-reading: There are some people who regard accompanying "as an opportunity to practice sight-reading, with the inexperienced pianist stumbling through his part, hopefully reducing it to the essentials and ignoring the correct and accurate pronunciation of the notes."[6] While anything goes, of course, in an informal situation when performing music just for fun, a very different standard is expected for professional accompanying. For today's performance standards, detailed practice and thorough rehearsal are required. On the other hand, the ability to sight-read is a wonderful convenience to those accompanists who need to learn a great deal of literature and are often given very little time to do so. Although most people consider sight-reading an inborn trait, it is an ability that can be developed through daily practice. (I often suggest to my students that they sight-read duets with a friend, an activity that requires them to continue playing without stopping to correct errors. It's also more fun.) Sight-reading ability is really proportionate to one's level of musicianship: one has to recognize chords, patterns, sequences, has to know how music works, what to expect on the next beat or in the next bar. Sight-reading in turn can improve musicianship by allowing one to become familiar with a wide range of literature.

Transposition: Transposition is another skill that seems to be closely allied with one's basic level of musicianship, and comes more easily and naturally to some than to others. Also, like sight-reading, the ability to transpose can be improved with practice. There are various methods of transposition: using movable clefs, thinking up or down a certain interval, thinking harmonically, or by employing a combination of any of these. Accompanists should train themselves to transpose up or down a whole or half step from what is written, since this is the trans-

position most commonly asked for by singers; for anything more than a minor third, the score is often available in different voice categories: low, medium, or high. Examples of songs that are relatively simple to transpose are: Beethoven, *Marmotte* or *Das Blümchen Wunderhold;* Mozart, *Wiegenlied;* Schubert, *Heidenröslien* or *Morgengruss*. (Personally, I was introduced to transposition in graduate school when I had to learn a Bach two-part invention and a movement of a Mozart sonata in every key, and to change keys up or down during the piece! It was a gruesome assignment, but the payoff was that I really knew my invention and sonata thoroughly because of it.)

Multiple staff reading: Another technical skill needed by piano accompanists is the ability to read three staves at once. Good accompanists can achieve an effective ensemble only if they are able to keep one eye on their part, one eye on the vocal line, and perhaps a third eye on the singer in order to catch cues, watch for breathing, and react to the vocalist's personal idiosyncrasies. (An assignment I often give to my students is to sing and play a simple song, for example, *Heidenröslein*. For this assignment, vocal quality is not important, and even singing the words might not be required: humming or "la la" is perfectly acceptable. Students sometimes resist this task at first, but in the long run they realize the great value in learning to observe all staves at once, and in discerning the interrelationship between the piano and vocal parts. It's an exercise I often do myself, in deepest private, when preparing for a recital.)

Orchestration: Closely allied to multiple staff reading is the matter of playing orchestral reductions. While programs made up entirely of lieder or song cycles do occur, the typical vocal recital, particularly in this country, has its fair share of selections drawn from the operatic repertoire. In playing opera-aria reductions, the pianist as nearly as possible has to conjure up orchestra sounds, whether they be string, wind, or brass. He can do this only by looking at the complete orchestral score rather than just accepting the usual piano-vocal operatic reductions. Should one ever be faced (Heaven forbid!) with the necessity of playing from the full orchestral score, experience in orchestration will help not only in reading the parts but in adapting them to the piano, so that it will be possible for one human being with just ten fingers to emulate an orchestra.

Attitude: Another indispensible element that determines the success of an accompanist is personality. When people say that accompanists are born and not made, I think they're referring to this aspect. All the other necessities that have been discussed—piano technique, musicianship, special accompanying skills—all these can, to a certain extent, be taught and acquired, or at least further developed. But unless the proper psychological attitudes are present from the very beginning, the aspiring accompanist might as well close the piano lid right now. By the proper psychological attitude, I do not mean mousiness or submissiveness, but rather the ability to create a good rapport and partnership with the singer. Flexibility, adaptability, sympathy, empathy, a little ESP, a lot of patience and tact—these are the characteristics of the accompanist who gives to and receives from the singer the support and inspiration that both require.

Rehearsal and stage skills: A successful rehearsal depends on singer and pianist reaching agreement on musical matters: mood, tempo, balance, style, and interpretation. Rehearsals should not be held until both have studied the text and prepared the music individually. The singer must study the piano part, and the accompanist the vocal line, so that the time together can be spent on matters of ensemble and interpretation rather than on learning notes and rhythms. A tape recording of the last few run-throughs is often advisable. Good rehearsals mean that there is a free exchange of ideas, with each person being supportive of the other.

Ideally, the last rehearsal should take place in the recital hall, with a knowledgeable musical friend as an audience of one to help check on matters of volume and balance. The accompanist uses this final rehearsal to familiarize himself with the piano and its bench (how to raise or lower it; does it squeak?), to decide on the position of the piano, to make sure that the lighting casts no shadows on the keyboard, to decide whether the piano lid should be up slightly or closed (a decision that depends on the carrying quality of both singer and piano), to make sure there is no draft to blow the music down, and to coach the page turner in his duties. (Personally, I prefer to do without a page turner, because often even the most experienced turner becomes nervous or forgetful, and turns the page too soon or too late to suit me.) At this time, if not before, accompanist and vocalist discuss what they will wear. (If I'm accompanying a woman, I must make sure that my dress color doesn't clash with hers.) Other details for this final rehearsal include deciding upon and rehearsing entrances, exits (usually the singer goes first, except sometimes if I'm accompanying a particularly gallant male), and bows. There is a discussion of cues for starting songs. (How to tell when the singer is ready? How can the singer tell when the accompanist is ready?) The musical team of singer and accompanist also decides at this last rehearsal at which points applause is appropriate. (The audience can sometimes be prevented from applauding after each song if the pianist's hands remain on the keyboard, signalling that there has been no let-up in concentration or intensity.)

Finally, having called ahead the last day to make sure the piano has been tuned, the accompanist arrives at the hall in time to see that the position of the piano is exactly the same as it was during rehearsal, to adjust the bench, to check on the lighting, to make sure that the music is all in proper order, and (a most important point) to exude an air of calm, confidence, and inspiration.

It should be clear by now that the singer's success often depends not only on the feeling projected by the accompanist, but also on the degree to which the pianist has trained himself or herself in technique, musicianship, and in those special accompanying skills that have just been discussed. Only when the relationship between singer and pianist is that of two equal members of a team can they work together to serve the music and so bring to life the intentions of both poet and composer.

Notes

[1] "Accompany," *Webster's New World Dictionary of the American Language: College Edition* (1960), 9.

[2] "Accompaniment." *Harvard Dictionary of Music* (1944), 8–9.

[3] Francois Couperin, "The Art of Playing the Harpsichord," translated by Dorothy Packard in *Clavier*, vol. 7, no. 4 (April 1968).

[4] C.P.E. Bach. *Essay on the True Art of Playing Keyboard Instruments,* translated and edited by William J. Mitchell. New York, 1949, p. 367.

[5] Gerald Moore, *The Unashamed Accompanist,* a Seraphim recording, Mono 60017.

[6] Louis Kentner, *Piano*. New York, 1976, p. 94.

Braille Music Forum: Additions to the Music Code

by Bettye Krolick

The official braille music code for the United States is the *Revised International Manual of Braille Music Notation 1955 (American Edition); Part I: Western Music*, compiled by H. V. Spanner with additional rules for American and Canadian practice being published in the *1975 American Addendum*. In the spring of 1981, other new rules were approved by the Braille Authority of North America (BANA) and will be issued shortly in the *1981 American Addendum*, published by the American Printing House for the Blind.

New braille music rules are developed in part to cover new print music notation signs and practices, as well as changing philosophies in braille music notation. New rules are also devised from the necessity to cover areas of print music notation, long standardized but not yet adequately covered by the braille music code. The new BANA rules were spawned for all these reasons.

Popular and Folk Music

Most of the rules are concerned with chord symbol notation, chord symbols in this instance referring to the musical shorthand for chords widely used in jazz, popular, rock, and folk music. This musical shorthand utilizes letters, numbers, and other signs to convey simple to highly complex chordal information in a brief space. Typical examples of chords expressed in this manner are G, Dmaj7, B7–9, Dm, C7sus, and so on.

In the 1956 manual, where chord symbol notation was called short-form scoring, Section XXIV contained rules for notating relatively simple chord symbols in braille. The advantage of the 1956 system was its provision for showing time value with the chord symbol; the major disadvantage was that musicians needing chord symbol information found it difficult to decipher the braille music. Therefore, the special braille symbols were not used. An additional disadvantage with the 1956 system was that it did not provide braille signs and rules adequate for today's music. This music utilizes numerous letter and number combinations often modified by a multiplicity of print signs, such as pluses and minuses, abbreviations such as dim. and sus., slashes, small circles, and so on. The print methods and signs are far from standardized, seeming to be limited primarily by the imaginations of the music publishers!

Braille music readers familiar with *Popular Music Lead Sheets* and recent U.S. transcriptions containing chord symbols have already been introduced to the provisions of the 1981 BANA rules, since the new method has been used on a trial basis for the last three years. Briefly, the system is that letters, slashes, parentheses, and numbers are written in literary braille, sharps and flats as music signs, and pluses and minuses as Nemeth signs. Melody, text, and chord symbols are written on a three-line parallel, with

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the text on the first line, the chords on the second, and the melody on the third. The chords are aligned with the text in such a way as to indicate whether they are to be played after, during, or with particular syllables. Transcriber's notes explain the alignment system and any special signs. Musicians who know literary but not music braille can easily read the text and chord symbols, thereby making it possible for more readers to use available materials.

Additions to Section XXIII cover chord diagrams as are found in folk and popular music publications and in folk instrument method books. New rules are given for barrés and damp or mute signs in this context because these signs were not previously covered by the braille music code.

Harmonic Analysis

A new subsection to Section XXVII is for harmonic analysis. Again, literary braille is used for literary material. Roman numerals are brailled as usual, except that they are preceded by single rather than double capital signs. Arabic numerals following roman numerals are brailled in the lower-cell position. Roman and arabic numerals and other signs comprising the harmonic analysis form the bottom line of the parallel with numbers aligned beneath corresponding bass notes.

Figured Bass

Another addition to Section XXVII is a new subsection B providing an alternate format for figured bass. In the new format, vertical columns of print numbers are brailled as vertical columns of braille signs. The vertical format is used particularly in music theory texts; the standard horizontal format is still to be used where figured bass is an integral part of musical compositions. *Harmony,* 3rd edition, by Walter Piston (BRM 24384, Music Section, NLS/BPH) utilizes the vertical format for figured bass.

Chant Notation

While chant notation rules were included in earlier braille music manuals, the 1956 manual omitted this subject, since, according to the preface, a supplement on Gregorian chant was to follow. Unfortunately, this supplement never materialized, although braille music readers continue to have a need for chant notation in braille. For this reason, the 1981 rules provide a braille sign for reciting notes in music, special brackets to surround the related text (often lengthy), and a braille pointing symbol for text alone. The new rules and two examples showing the use of these signs have been added to Section XXII.

Classical Guitar

Rules for three important features of classical guitar music, not covered in the 1956 manual and its *1975 American Addendum,* are included in the 1981 changes. These are right-hand fingering, shifts or glides and glissandos, and rasgueado signs. The internationally accepted symbols for right-hand fingering, the print letters p, i, m, a, and c, are brailled without letter signs in the literary code and aligned on a line beneath the notes or signs they modify. Rules for right-hand fingering and the new signs for shifts and glides and for rasgueado are explained and illustrated in an addition to Section XXIII.

The discussion of barrés, particularly the print signs, has been expanded to more com-

pletely cover examples found in print music. In addition, barrés written as vertical brackets in print are now assigned to dot 4, the sign formerly listed as an optional barré. Barrés are also discussed in Section XXIII.

Other Additions

With the official adoption of signs for 256th notes and rests already in use in Italy, Russia, Germany, and other countries, the United States reaches a point of greater international agreement. These new signs are added to Section I.

Provisions for unusual key signatures and for time signatures containing note values are moves towards covering twentieth-century notation. Another change, also necessitated by twentieth-century music, is a rule for a chord tie between the last note of an accumulating arpeggio and the resulting chord. These changes occur in Sections V, VI, and IX, respectively.

These are the highlights of the 1981 BANA changes. The publication and availability of the *1981 American Addendum* to the *Revised International Manual of Braille Music Notation 1956* will be announced in this magazine.

Reader comments and articles for possible inclusion in the *Braille Music Forum* should be sent to Bettye Krolick, 602 Ventura Road, Champaign, IL 61820.

New Music Materials

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Press braille and most recorded materials may also be purchased from their respective producers. Large-print scores are available on loan only. These listings show, where possible, composer, title, print publisher, producer, and Music Section catalog number.

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Sources

HC. Handcopied braille; available only on loan from the Library of Congress
NBT. Norges Blindeforbunds Trykkeri, Rosenkrantzgt. 3, 5000 Bergen, Norway
RNIB. Royal National Institute for the Blind, 224 Great Portland Street, London, W1N 6AA, England
Sine Qua Non Productions, Ltd. A Division of Marison Associates, Inc., 25 Mill Street, Providence, RI 02904
VFB. Verein zur Förderung der Blindenbildung e.V., 26 Bleekstrasse, Hannover-Kirchrode 3000, West Germany

Braille

Books

Hitchcock, Hugh Wiley
Music in the United States: A Historical Introduction, 2nd ed. **BRM 26788**
Prentice-Hall HC

Historical survey of American music from the colonial period to the present. Discusses sacred and secular music of the colonies and treats nineteenth-century music in terms of the "cultivated" and "vernacular" traditions. Devotes one chapter to the music of Charles Ives. Includes sections on post-World War II experimental music and recent trends in jazz and popular music.

Librettos

Bellini, Vincenzo
La Sonnambula (English & Italian)
BRM 26044
G. Schirmer HC

Debussy, Claude
Pelléas et Mélisande (English & French) **BRM 26388**
G. Schirmer HC

Menotti, Gian Carlo
Vanessa (English) **BRM 26011**
G. Schirmer HC

Puccini, Giacomo
Turandot (English & Italian)
BRM 26015
Ricordi HC

Verdi, Giuseppe
Rigoletto (Italian) **BRM 26051**
Franco Colombo HC

Scores

Choruses, Sacred
Byrd, William
Mass for 4 Voices (cantus, altus, tenor, bassus) **BRM 26921**
Chester RNIB

Schubert, Franz
Der dreiundzwanzigste Psalm (The 23rd Psalm): Gott, Meine Zuversicht, D. 706 (SSAA, piano) **BRM 26828**
Peters NBT

Webber, Andrew Lloyd
Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat **BRM 26895**
Novello RNIB

Choruses, Secular
Britten, Benjamin
The Evening Primrose from Five Flower Songs (SATB) **BRM 26924**
Boosey and Hawkes RNIB
Marsh Flowers from Five Flower Songs (SATB) **BRM 26899**
Boosey and Hawkes RNIB
The Succession of the Four Sweet Months from Five Flower Songs (SATB) **BRM 26843**
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Oboe Music
Hindemith, Paul
Sonata **BRM 26328**
Schott HC

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Cappelen, Christian
Legende **BRM 26741**
Norsk Musikforlag NBT

Elgarøy, Jan
Toccata Brevis **BRM 26693**
print publisher undetermined NBT

Haarklou, Johannes
Julpraeludier **BRM 26690**
Norsk Musikforlag NBT

Hindemith, Paul
Sonata III (1940) **BRM 26341**
Belwin Mills HC

Thalben-Ball, George Thomas
Elegy **BRM 26900**
Paxton RNIB

Piano—Methods
Bastien, James
The Older Beginner Piano Course, Level 2 **BRM 26336**
Kjos West HC

Schaum, John Walter
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Belwin NBT
Piano Course, Book A **BRM 26631**
Belwin NBT
Piano Course, Book B **BRM 26630**
Belwin NBT

Thompson, John Sylvanus
Teaching Little Fingers To Play from Modern Course for the Piano **BRM 26652**
Chappell NBT

Piano—Studies and Exercises
Thompson, John Sylvanus
First Grade Studies **BRM 26653**
Willis NBT

Piano Music
Aasland, Geburg
Bagatelles op. 19 **BRM 26556**
print publisher undetermined NBT

Bach, Johann Sebastian
Bach for Beginners, Book 1 (selections from Notenbuch der Anna Magdalena Bach (1725)) **BRM 26639**
Winthrop Rogers NBT

Bastien, James
Major Scales and Pieces, Level 4
BRM 26013
Kjos West HC

Copland, Aaron
Fantasy **BRM 26010**
Boosey and Hawkes HC

Frost, Bernice, comp.
20th Century Piano Music, Book IA
BRM 26337
Belwin Mills HC

Schubert, Franz
The Easiest Original Pieces
BRM 26339
Peters HC

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Variations on a Theme of Corelli op. 42
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Children's Pieces op. 27 **BRM 26570**
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BRM 26503
MCA Music HC

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Lees, Benjamin
Variations for Piano and Orchestra
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Head, Michael
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Whaley, Garwood
Fundamental Studies for Timpani
BRM 26327
International Music HC

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Ljos **BRM 26544**
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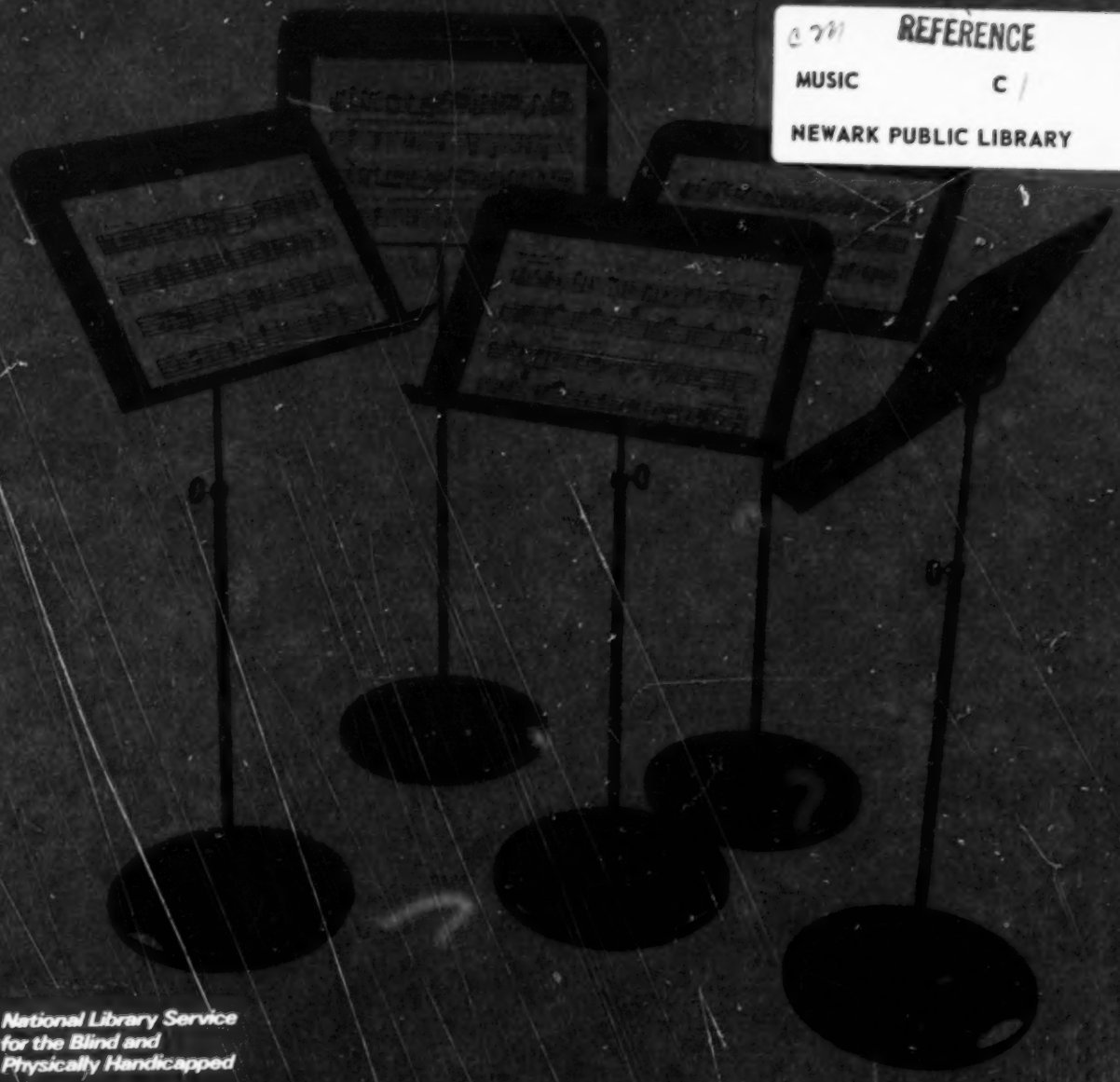

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Selected Reprints

An Overview: The Crisis in Music Education

by Michael P. Prescott
Music Educators Journal
November 1981

Robert Matthews knows how a music education crisis can alter a teacher's career. When the Memphis City Board of Education voted last spring to eliminate eight music instructor positions, the superintendent told Matthews that with only two years seniority, the chances were slim that he would have a job in the fall. "I had a personal crisis on my hands," he explained. "Parents were coming to my house at midnight asking what could be done to save these music programs." At one point he started looking for a new job. Five weeks later, Matthews, who has a much stronger vocal than instrumental background, was offered a choral teaching position at a junior high school far from the school where he previously taught.

Matthews is only one of hundreds of music educators across the country facing termination, a move to a different school, or a change in responsibilities because of budget- and tax-cutting movements sweeping through federal, state, and local governments. But a reduction in educational funds isn't the only reason for these crises. Declining school populations and the deteriorating public image of school teachers as capable educators of our children also are alarming the music education community. Contributing to this is a less-than-adequate effort to inform legislators and school administrators about the importance of music to the total educational development of students.

Although the music education crisis may be the most severe in more than a half century, it isn't the first facing music educators in the United States. The September 1934 issue of *Music Educators Journal* included a Declaration of Faith in the Cultural Arts that stated in part, "Our schools are facing serious problems. The cultural subjects, especially, are being attacked. . . . Curtailments in educational budgets must not be permitted to affect vitally the cultural subjects, especially music." At that time, as the country struggled out of the Great Depression and started to rearm its military facilities, educational budgets were closely scrutinized. A similar situation is occurring today.

The federal government budget cuts, coupled with tax cuts for businesses and individuals, signed into law by President Reagan in August, could mean hundreds of music education positions will be eliminated. For many months, as a result of the mandate the voters handed Reagan to put America's economy back on track, these cuts were accepted as inevitable. One Washington columnist wrote, "It's not a matter of whether or not we will have cuts, but rather how deep they will be when they will start." Everyone, including teachers, will be affected in some way by the $35 billion in cuts in the federal budget for the 1982 fiscal year, which started October 1. The National Education Association estimated "that federal, state, and local financial cutbacks will reduce the total number of public school

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teachers by ten percent in fall 1981."

How will these federal budget cuts affect music education? A close examination of the federal budget shows that school districts that instruct children of federal employees, such as military personnel, are receiving less assistance. Money is becoming scarce for other school aid programs such as help for bilingual education and school lunch programs. Symphony orchestras, artists in residence, and other community art programs will receive one third less aid during the 1982 Federal Budget Fiscal Year from the National Endowment for the Arts. Schools that rely on federal money from the National Endowment for the Humanities to support scholars in residence are also facing a one-third cut in aid.

If music education programs are to continue at current funding levels, it now appears that reduced federal aid for education and the arts will place the burden on state and local governments. But many state and local governments are not receptive to increases in their already burgeoning tax burdens. In addition, some state tax codes are tied to federal internal revenue codes, thereby automatically reducing state taxes at the same time federal taxes fall. The National Governors Conference has estimated this connection will reduce state revenues by $2.3 billion in the 1982 fiscal year. As Joseph Cronin, former Illinois state superintendent of education, and Ross A. Hodel, finance section manager, Illinois State Board of Education, recently stated in an article in *School Business Affairs* about the financial crisis in Chicago City Schools, "It is very difficult and unpopular to raise property taxes for city schools."

Instead, programs, including music classes, are being eliminated. The taxpayer movement that started in 1978 when California voters passed Proposition 13, a ten-percent slash in property taxes totalling $7 billion, has rapidly spread eastward. As California Governor Jerry Brown stated in 1978, "Proposition 13 creates challenges, it creates problems, but it creates an opportunity to make government in California a model for people all over the country."

Apparently the citizens of Massachusetts, the state often called "Taxachusetts" because its property taxes were seventy percent higher than the national average, heard and heeded Brown's statement. After nearly three years of debate in the state legislature and a state-wide ballot initiative in last November's election, Massachusetts voters overwhelmingly passed Proposition 2½, so called because it limits property taxes to a maximum of two and a half percent of fair market value. For many taxpayers, this meant an average reduction of forty-one percent, which drained $1.3 billion in local funds from city council and school district budgets.

The tax reduction movement also surfaced in Idaho in 1978, and last summer the taxpayers of Weston, Connecticut debated increasing property taxes or reducing their $7 million school budget by $400,000, a scene that could be repeated in many American towns in the future.

Across the country, these budget and tax cuts have affected fire and police protection programs, aid to handicpaped citizens, and school budgets. When school budgets are cut, music programs are often one of the first to be proposed for curtailment or elimi-

nation. Massachusetts is a representative example.

A survey conducted last summer by the Boston Globe of twenty-nine cities and towns in Massachusetts showed that cuts in public safety programs had been made, but "Schools took the largest cuts in personnel and programs. Music, art, drama, and athletics faced the deepest cuts." In the Waltham, Massachusetts school district alone, proposed cuts included 250 employees and the complete athletic, music, art, drama, and industrial arts programs.

Another factor adversely affecting the continuation of music education programs is birth rate declines after the post-war baby booms. This has changed the way school administrators and finance experts allocate school budget monies.

Since 1971, elementary and secondary public school enrollments have dropped dramatically. According to information from the National Center for Education Statistics, a division of the United States Department of Education, large increases in school populations peaked in fall 1971 and dropped over 5,000,000 students by fall 1980. The largest percentage decrease—2.5 percent—occurred between fall 1978 and fall 1979.

Additional information from the National Center for Education Statistics indicates that "During the last five years, the number of students enrolled in elementary and secondary schools has declined by 8.6 percent, or about 3.8 million students."

Large increases in the birth rates and public school enrollments may not happen in the near future. The National Education Association reports that the number of annual births will increase slightly until 1987, but will begin to decline again each year beginning in 1989. The U.S. Department of Education also predicts decreasing school enrollments through the 1980s.

The decreases in birth rates and public school enrollments and its effect on local tax bases will vary depending on the community. On the national level, as more taxpayers leave the work force and retire, the tax burden on those people remaining in the work force will have to increase to maintain all current program levels. If federal tax revenues are lower because of fewer taxpayers, state and local tax revenues must increase or there will be less money for art and music programs at current funding levels. A study recently completed by the Dallas Independent School District projected that by 1987 the district will need twice as much money as their current budget in order to offer the same programs and serve the same number of students. The study also reported that by 1990 there will be more "older Americans" than school-aged children. It also concluded that by the end of the decade only twenty percent of the adult population, "taxpayers," will have school-age children.

The decrease in the number of taxpayers with school-age children could spell the end of many music programs. The Special Report on the Arts prepared in February 1980 for the Illinois State Board of Education by David Rindskopf of CEMREL, Inc., and Jerry Ross, who was a professor at Northwestern University when the report was prepared, concluded that "Whether due to enrollment declines or changes in emphasis, it appears that cutbacks in faculties in Illinois schools will damage arts programs more quickly than cutbacks in other areas."

A third factor contributing to the crisis in music education is what Mary Hoffman, president of the Music Educators National Conference calls the "decline in image of the schoolmaster." According to Hoffman, despite the amount of money being poured into basic education, students are not learning reading and math as well as in the past. "Otherwise, why would we have remedial reading, remedial math, and graduation competency tests?" she asks.

Phyliss Marcuccio from the National Science Teachers Association explained that science teachers are facing a similar crisis, especially due to recent back-to-basics movements which emphasize reading, writing, and math courses. She noted that last year only one graduate of the state of Minnesota's higher education system had a physics teaching degree. Marcuccio also said a reduction in high school science classes is limiting the number of students eligible for engineering schools. Engineering is a profession where large numbers of unfilled positions for trained professionals already exist.

This is forcing curriculum planners to reevaluate entire school programs. "Part of the crisis is that education in general just hasn't gotten its act together," Hoffman explained. "If music educators are not willing to sell their profession, then they must not want their jobs. Teachers have to show parents and school boards what their programs can do for the students. No one can sell the product as well as the local teacher. To do this a music teacher should make a personal effort to secure as much data as possible.

"Teachers owe it to themselves to know the actions of their local school boards," Hoffman continued. "Teachers have as much right to know how the funds will be used as anyone."

Furthermore, the music education and music industry fields are splitting into smaller special interest groups. In a report, Analysis for the Advancement of Music Education Feasibility Study, prepared last April for the Music Educators National Conference and the Music Industry Council, Daniel Kobida, a music consultant, identifies one end product of a music education crisis, "fragmentation of the music industry." Kobida reports that there are currently over 100 organizations actively involved in the music community. And within those organizations, most are "effectively serving interests within music."

"We need to talk about music in general. We have band people, keyboard people, publishers, orchestra people, string people, and so forth. Strong programs need strong, unified promotion," he said in an interview.

This fragmentation of the music industry and music education field may be affecting the way legislators view music's contribution to a child's educational development. The difficulty of persuading lawmakers who approve school district budgets that music is important to the total development of a child's intellectual ability adds to the music education crisis. Although prepared by two consultants outside of state government, the Illinois State Board of Education's Special Report on the Arts defined "Arts" courses as those "which do not result in the production of any 'useful' end product" and that "have no commercial value." While the definition of the term "useful" has been widely debated within the arts community, "it certainly lets legislators cut those art pro-

grams they feel do not provide this useful end product,'' according to Marlynn Likens, MENC legislative liaison.

Attempts to include music in state-mandated curriculums have been successful in only a handful of states. Many states are abolishing arts specialist positions in their departments of education. Similar to the fate of many music program faculties, the arts specialist position is often eliminated to cover the expense of other specialists such as the math and social studies specialists. In response to a letter from Don Dillon, MENC executive director, about the elimination of the arts consultant in the New Hampshire Department of Education, Governor Hugh J. Gallen wrote that ''the decision to eliminate the Arts Consultant rather than, for example, the Math or Social Studies Consultant, was made by the Board with the advice of the Department.'' The letter also stated that ''it is not possible to accommodate all of the reductions through the elimination of vacant positions or cuts in non-personnel areas.'' New Hampshire, unlike Massachusetts, has one of the nation's lowest tax rates and faced a $25 million deficit. Gallen proposed a ten-percent reduction in state employment roles to help eliminate the deficit.

Other state music and arts positions have been equally unfortunate. The position that represented music education in the Pennsylvania Department of Education was eliminated last summer. When it was originally slated for abolishment, the editor of the *Pennsylvania Music Educators News* wrote that ''Sooner or later, what happens in Harrisburg (the state capital) will affect your individual teaching situation.''

Some school administrators are taking a hard look at their school music programs and, in many cases, are retaining them. At the recent convention of the National School Board Association in Dallas, several visitors to the American Music Conference (AMC) exhibit booth said they had been involved with the discontinuation of school music programs, and expressed concern about music teachers' attitudes and their apparent lack of interest in preserving school music programs in curriculums, according to Roman Babiak, AMC director of communications services. Babiak noted that several school board members said they now realized their mistakes.

For Robert Matthews, that may be the best news he's heard since last June.

The Probing Pianism of Murray Perahia

by Raymond K. Long
Ovation
December 1981

A glance at the list of prizes and recordings that have embellished the career of thirty-four-year-old Murray Perahia will doubtless convey the image of a super-virtuoso to one who's never heard him perform. There was the Young Concert Artists Award and the Kosciusko Chopin Prize (which he won at the age of eighteen), in addition to the first-ever Avery Fisher Award and a victory at the 1972 Leeds International Piano Competition in England (no other American had ever attained it before). Shortly after winning at Leeds, Perahia signed a long-term contract with Columbia (now CBS), which has yielded over a dozen recordings, including one that was named best solo piano record of 1973 by *Time* Magazine.

A phenomenal pianist, you conclude. Indeed, but not for the reasons you may imagine. His technique is remarkable, but no more so than the dozen or more pianists who share his recording success. He dominates the keyboard with grace and dignity, yet his presence onstage attracts no more notice than anyone else among his contemporaries (in terms of boxing-weight classifications, Perahia would run anywhere from a bantamweight to a featherweight), so more than mere presence is involved.

To get at the secret of Perahia's success, one would do well to listen to the critics. D.R. Martin (of the St. Paul *Dispatch*) cited Perahia as a "pianist who probes, who explores, who doesn't take a single bar for granted . . . who is a musician first and a pianist second." In a similar vein, John Guinn (of the Detroit *Free Press*) noted that "no pianist I have encountered in his generation can come near the depth of his artistic insights. He forces you to listen to every note, because he has the uncanny ability to make every note important . . . to reveal the core of the music he performs. He shapes phrases and lines with an intuitive sense of perfectly balanced proportion."

It becomes apparent, then, that Murray Perahia's interpretations are distinguished by their scrupulous attention to details that may elude the notice of equally gifted pianists. He is, as D.R. Martin suggests, the musician's pianist, rather than the pianist's pianist. He scrutinizes the scores he studies with the same eye for detail possessed by legendary fuss-budgets such as Toscanini. Perahia's readings, like Toscanini's (with an orchestra, of course), are more like revelations than recitals. One comes away from a Perahia concert with a sense of having heard familiar pieces for the first time. A voice here, a phrase there, long embedded in the music, comes to life at his fingertips.

In chatting with Perahia about his interpretations, one is often confronted by expressions such as "phrase lengths," "how many small phrases make a big phrase," and

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Raymond K. Long contributes articles on music to national magazines. From his home base in Portland, Maine he also writes the program notes for the Portland Symphony Orchestra. © 1981 by *Ovation*. All rights reserved. Used with permission.

even "the mood of a phrase." He demonstrates a deep concern about "structure—both from phrase structure and the harmonic point of view." When asked about his method of preparing a non-programmatic piece (such as a Mozart sonata), the pianist pointed to his need for coming to terms with the "motivic structure, the harmonic structure" of the composition in question. "One needs to analyze how a motive changes during the course of the piece—what its relationship is to its development; how the second subject differs from the first and how it's alike, because very often in Mozart's cadenzas, the two are combined in some sort of way. So all of these things give one an insight into a piece—they're the 'keys' to a piece, in a manner of speaking. There's usually a formula, but very often a composer departs from the formula and one must see how he does so. Why, for instance, Schubert's recapitulations often make very strong use of the subdominant, and this idea of the subdominant being far away was very important to Schubert. I think these kinds of harmonic, motivic, contrapuntal analyses are very important to the understanding of the music."

Thus run the musings of a thoughtful virtuoso, whose views of virtuosity itself reflect his concern for form and structure. "Virtuosity for its own sake is not something that interests me personally. When I hear it, I'm astounded by it, but I don't feel moved, and I like to feel moved when I'm listening to music, so it's not something that attracts me although I think there's a place for it. I don't think, however, just to take an example, that all octave passages in the works of the great composers should be played loud and fast just for the sake of playing them loud and fast, because very often they're motivic. In the Liszt Sonata, which I've been playing, there's an octave passage near the end that states the motive itself, but in a different rhythm. If this particular passage is played too loud and too fast, you don't hear it. It can destroy the motive of the music. You lose the music if you play too virtuosically, sometimes. It depends. One mustn't lose sight of what the piece is about. I would say it's music first, and then it's a display, if necessary, of one's virtuosity."

However unpianistic that assessment of virtuosity may sound, the philosophy behind it has earned its owner a lion's share of public acclaim in the last few years. How, though, did Perahia formulate his unique approach to piano playing? As he relates it, it was opera, rather than piano performance, that turned him on to music at a very tender age. "We would go to the Metropolitan every Saturday night. Then I would come home and pick out the tunes on a toy piano. I would also conduct, so I'm told, anything I had heard at the opera or a concert when I listened to it again on the radio." What a kid can do on a toy piano will doubtless sound better on the real thing, so Murray's folks matched him up with an instrument and a fine teacher named Jeannette Haien, with whom he studied for eleven years.

After dominating the music scene at New York City's High School of Performing Arts, Perahia went on to study at the Mannes School of Music (also in New York) where he delved into things like counterpoint, theory, and Schenker Analysis. "I had a very good education there. For instance, I learned a great deal from playing chamber

music, which I studied with Artur Balsam. Because of that experience, I'm less of a virtuoso pianist than I might have become, but I also feel that it has given me a solidity and a basis that I wouldn't have had otherwise."

As Mozart piano concerto addicts probably know, Murray Perahia has contracted with CBS Records to record all the concerti with the English Chamber Orchestra (as of this writing, all but six have been recorded). What marks these recordings is not only Perahia's outstanding playing, but also his competent conducting, which he does from the keyboard.

His involvement with chamber music at Mannes provided him with a unique perspective of the soloist's role in works such as the Mozart concerti. "I saw them," says Perahia, "at least a large part of them, certainly the early ones and the middle ones, as glorified chamber music in which each and every player has something important to contribute. It wasn't so much 'piano vs. orchestra,' as in Beethoven's later concertos, but rather, piano *with* orchestra. In other words, the piano supporting the orchestra at times, accompanying it, especially during certain woodwind and string passages, and the orchestra doing the same for the piano in a chamber music-like fashion." Perahia is quick to heap praise on his colleagues in the English Chamber Orchestra as a group of musicians who share his perspective and are willing to spend the amount of time needed to come up with an articulate collaboration.

While at Mannes, Perahia studied the piano on his own, another factor in the formation of his unique approach to the instrument. "I spent most of my time at the piano trying to get away from a set interpretation. I realized I had to find a technique through which I could express myself, a way of making music which was completely my own. So I had to decide what was important in music and spent a lot of time deciding on my values, and I thought that the only way to make sense out of music was to understand its structure."

In 1967, Perahia was invited to perform at the Marlboro Music Festival in Vermont, and thereby gained the acquaintance of numerous musicians whose lofty views of music further helped to mold his own. Among them were Rudolf Serkin, with whom Perahia played some four-hand music, and under whom he served as an assistant at Philadelphia's Curtis Institute. There was Pablo Casals (with whom Perahia played in private), Alexander Schneider, and the eminent Mieczyslaw Horszowski, a pianist for whom Perahia developed an extraordinary respect and fondness.

After winning at Leeds in 1972, Perahia spent a great deal of time in England (he now resides there) and became acquainted with Clifford Curzon, another artist (like those at Marlboro) known for his musicianship, rather than virtuosity. He teamed up with the great Peter Pears in presenting lieder recitals, and came to enjoy the friendship of Benjamin Britten, which lasted until the composer's death in 1976. "Benjamin Britten's piano playing, for me, is one of the most extraordinary things I've ever heard. What impressed me were his incredible colors. You can hear them in those recordings with Pears where he does the *Winterreise* and *Schoene Muellerin* cycles of Schubert. He was a terrific musician." Perahia's emphasis, as always, is on

musicianship, but we mustn't forget that he's made a name for himself in music that calls for much in the way of fire and passion—namely, that of Chopin and Schumann. Specializing in Mozart and all the while succeeding with the early Romantics is akin to hitting home runs in baseball and then scoring goals in hockey. How does Perahia do both?

As with Mozart's works, his preparation of Chopin and Schumann incorporates a great deal of attention to fine detail, particularly with regard to pedalling. "I use the *sostenuto* pedal quite a bit in Schumann and in Chopin. As a matter of fact, what's taught me the most about pedalling *is* Chopin. If one studies the original pedal markings in Chopin, especially in the B minor Sonata, one sees such ingenious things—pedalling through rests, but then not pedalling at ends of small *fioritura* passages, so that the last notes of those passages are just up in the sky, alone, without any pedal. It makes for a beautiful effect and Chopin does that very often. I think the pedalling is a very important factor in determining how to play this kind of music."

When playing Schumann, Perahia makes it a point to check out the literary references that pervade the German master's compositions. The *Papillons* (Op. 2), for example, are based on the account of a fantastic masked ball described in the final chapter of Jean-Paul's novel *Flegeljahre (Years of Indiscretion)*. The third episode of Schumann's adaptation portrays a boot, which takes to the floor and dances all by itself. In learning the music, Perahia suspected from the nature of the music that the boot must have been a huge one, and structured his tempo accordingly, but took care to confirm that feeling by consulting a translation of Jean-Paul's novel in which the item in question was termed "a seven-league boot gliding hither and thither of its own accord." As the pianist says, "I try to get back into the world of the composer to play the work the way he had it in mind when he composed it. I try to give cohesion and life to the composer's statement."

As to romantic liberties taken with Chopin and Schumann, Perahia prefers to answer "the way Schnabel answered when asked whether he played with feeling and *rubato* or in strict time. He said, 'I play with feeling and in time,' So I try to put my heart at the mercy of the manuscript. My heart doesn't force me to do something that the manuscript doesn't say, but I don't like to play anything metronomically. I believe in playing everything with a certain amount of *rubato*, though it has to be very subtle and with what I would term 'harmonic' *rubato*, rather than 'great heaves and sighs' which I tend not to favor."

As mentioned, Perahia now makes his home in England (London), where he's found not only a myriad of musical friends, but a wife. He tours throughout the U.S. for four months out of each year, travels throughout the European continent and Far East for much of what's left, and fills what time he has at home with intensive practice (five hours a day on the average) and other musical pursuits, such as attending concerts and listening to recordings.

Unlike Barenboim and Ashkenazy, Perahia intends to limit his conducting activities to the Mozart concertos he is recording with the English Chamber Orchestra. He is

looking to expand his repertoire and has been concentrating on a batch of Beethoven sonatas of late, two of which (Opp. 7 and 22) he has already recorded. He is in the process of adding more Liszt to his repertoire and intends to study some Debussy soon.

Those who fancied Perahia's way with Chopin's First Piano Concerto will be glad to learn that he is now preparing Chopin's Second Concerto. As for contemporary works, Perahia expresses an interest in Sessions and Copland, but has very little time to give them at present.

Those who meet and talk with Murray Perahia are uniformly impressed by what impressed me during our discussion together. When I first knew him (during our high school days in the early sixties), Murray was a quiet, unassuming young man who dealt with others in a gracious and soft-spoken manner. The answer to the question "Will Success Spoil Murray Perahia?" is "No." The honesty that attends his piano playing also affects his view of himself and others.

To Perahia, music-making is a weighty responsibility that he takes very seriously. "I want each concerto to mean something," he once said. "I want to feel that each one is an event for the audience, for the other players, and for me." To the millions who have heard him perform live and on recordings, his playing makes for an event, and quite an event at that.

Béla Bartók: The Master Musician

by Benjamin Suchoff
Music Educators Journal
October 1981

Today Béla Bartók stands astride the twentieth century as its colossus of composition. More and more his name is linked to those great men of music in the procession of Bs: Bach, Beethoven, Brahms, and Bartók. Composer, virtuoso pianist, and ethnomusicologist—he methodically articulated the true rural folk music of Hungary and its minority peoples. At his highest integrative stage, he combined the "language" of East European music folklore with West European composition techniques. His *Concerto for Orchestra* best illustrates this synthesis of East and West.

Bartók was born on March 25, 1881, in Nagyszentmiklós (now Sînnicolau Mare, Rumania), a small town in the southern part of the Kingdom of Hungary—then part of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. This town, peopled by Germans, Hungarians, Rumanians, and Serbs, was the home of an agricultural college that also served as the cultural center. Both Bartók's father and grandfather served as principal of the college; his father founded the town's first orchestra, and his mother, also highly educated, was a gifted pianist.

Bartók gave early evidence of musical precocity, but his mother waited until he was six before she began teaching him the piano. Two years later his father died. Because no pension was available, the young widow turned to elementary school teaching for her livelihood. Constantly seeking better educational and cultural opportunities for her son, Mrs. Bartók obtained teaching positions in small towns in the north (now in Czechoslovakia) and the northeast (now in Rumanian Transylvania), and, in 1894, in Pozsony (now Bratislava, Czechoslovakia), a city close to Vienna with centuries of music traditions.

Bartók began to compose at the age of nine and to perform in public as a pianist at eleven. In Pozsony he studied with László Erkel, son of Hungary's celebrated opera composer, Ferenc Erkel. When he graduated from the gymnasium (high school), he followed the advice of his idol, Ernst von Dohnányi, to continue his studies at the Academy of Music in Budapest rather than the Vienna Conservatorium. Bartók immediately won recognition as a piano virtuoso and, following study of the orchestral works of Richard Strauss, as Hungary's leading young composer. In 1903, his last year at the Academy of Music, he composed his symphonic poem *Kossuth*, which caused a sensation at its Budapest premiere. Bartók, now an ardent Hungarian nationalist, incorporated a parody of the Austrian national anthem in one of the poem's movements.

After composing *Kossuth*, which combined the dissonant harmonic innovations of Richard Strauss with the style of Franz

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Liszt, Bartók composed his *Rhapsody for Piano and Orchestra* (even more typically Lisztian in structure), *Scherzo for Piano and Orchestra*, and *Suite No. 1. for Orchestra*. Attempting to create a folk-based Hungarian art music, Bartók followed in Liszt's erroneous footsteps by adopting gypsy-flavored urban folk song and dance—at that time thought to be the genuine sources of composition, but later found to have been composed, for the most part, by amateur writers from the educated classes, and then propagated in distorted styles by city gypsy bands.

While he was finishing the orchestration of the *Rhapsody* during the summer of 1904, Bartók overheard a Hungarian nursemaid singing melodies of such different and special quality that he notated and subsequently harmonized them for publication. Her repertoire included songs with pentatonic turns, descending melodic structure, and other features that immediately convinced the young composer he had stumbled on an ancient melody type hitherto unknown in educated Hungarian music circles. The girl was born in the remote southeast part of Transylvania (home of the Székely, a Hungarian-speaking people). Bartók began collecting Hungarian and other ethnic folk melodies that provided him the long-sought, truly indigenous music sources upon which to construct a valid Hungarian style of composition.

Beginning in 1905, he was fortunate to have the advice of Zoltán Kodály in recording and transcription techniques. In the summer of 1906, Bartók and Kodály pooled their resources as folk song collectors and collaborators. They selected the best music specimens, clothed them with piano accompaniments then prevailing in Budapest, underwrote the costs of publication, and used the royalties to support their future field trips throughout greater Hungary. Each explorer recorded peasant performances on wax cylinders of the primitive Edison phonograph. The publiation, *Magyar népdalok* (Hungarian Folk Songs), appeared that fall. Bartók transcribed the first ten songs; Kodály, the next ten. Unfortunately, the venture was a financial disaster. The public was enraptured by the melodies of Franz Lehár's latest and most popular operetta, *The Merry Widow*; moreover, neither the tunes nor the "radical" harmonic accompaniments of the Bartók-Kodály opus were appreciated.

Although he would have gladly devoted himself full-time to ethnomusicological pursuits, no funds were available. Bartók gave piano recitals at home and abroad and also served as piano accompanist to augment his income. In 1907, he succeeded his own teacher as professor of piano at the Budapest Academy of Music. This happy event permitted him to settle in Hungary and to continue his studies in music folklore. When Bartók analyzed the transcriptions he had made of the hundreds of folk tunes he had collected, particularly those gathered in Transylvania, he found that most were based on either primitive pentatonic scales or old church modes and that they contained a great variety of rhythmic phrases and tempo changes. He incorporated these features into his compositions, inspired by his study of Debussy's work in which he found pentatonic phrases similar to those contained in Hungarian peasant music.

The new sound, inadequate orchestras,

and disinterested conductors contributed to the rejection of his works by Budapest audiences. In 1911, Bartók, Kodály, and other musicians organized a music society whose purpose was to form an orchestra able to play any music in a proper way. But the public was indifferent and the venture failed. The next year Bartók withdrew from public life and devoted himself to his studies in music folklore. Until the end of World War I he traveled to remote areas of Hungary to collect music specimens from the Rumanians of Transylvania, the Slovaks and Ruthenians of the north and northeast, and the Serbs and Bulgarians of the south and southeast. He also traveled to North Africa in 1913 to record Arab peasant music.

During his five- to six-year "withdrawal" period, Bartók composed his first ballet, *The Wooden Prince*, and his only opera, *Bluebeard's Castle*. These works, excellently performed, reversed the previously negative attitude of the Budapest public, catapulted him to fame abroad, and won for him a publishing contract with the Vienna firm of Universal Edition. Bartók wrote in his 1921 autobiography, "After these promising beginnings there followed, alas! the complete political and economic breakdown of 1918." Because the Treaty of Trianon, two years later, stripped Hungary of Slovakia, Transylvania, and other minority population areas, Bartók could no longer undertake field trips to those territories to complete his ambitious objective of thoroughly investigating the vocal and instrumental products of peasant villages.

During the 1920s Bartók's fame as a composer spread throughout Europe. He found himself in great demand as composer-pianist and, in 1927, a concert tour brought him to the United States for the first time. In addition to his piano teaching, he lectured and wrote articles on folk music; transcribed his field recordings of Hungarian, Slovakian, and Rumanian folk melodies—resulting in book-length studies of this material between 1921 and 1925; and composed piano music to meet his need for new concert works. In 1926, for example, he wrote his *Sonata, Out of Doors, Nine Little Piano Pieces*, and *Piano Concerto No. 1*.

When Bartók had amassed a substantial number of peasant tunes, he found that the melodies were almost exclusively monophonic. He looked for new harmonic means to avoid stereotyped nineteenth-century progressions. In1907 he had found the desired approach in the music of Claude Debussy, and the next year he harmonized an old Hungarian folk song with chains of unresolved dissonances in the form of added-note chords (No. 4 from *Fourteen Bagatelles* for piano). He needed structural regularity to avoid what he called the "unbearable excesses of the Romanticists." As a point of departure, he turned to the progressive sonata form of Beethoven. This structural feature is in many of his works, including the first movement of both the *Piano Sonata* (1926) and the *Viola Concerto* (1945). A striking similarity in mood and music dialogue exists between the second movement of Beethoven's *Piano Concerto No. 4* (1805–06) and Bartók's *Piano Concerto No. 3* (1945).

Bartók set himself the goal of combining the already mastered harmonic and formal aspects of his art with contrapuntal procedures—all within the context of the fusion of national folk music styles. Instead of

Bach, whose works he had studied with particular care as a pianist, teacher, and editor, he turned to Bach's Italian predecessors and contemporaries for guidance: Frescobaldi, Della Ciaia, and Zipoli, among others. This apparently occurred during Bartók's concert tour of Italy in 1925, as evidenced by his arranging and performing Frescobaldi and M. Rossi organ works the next year and by the *Piano Concerto No. 1* (1926) with its derivations from Italian toccata style of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. This style of polyphonic writing was more suitable to Bartók's purpose than that of Bach because the Italian "austere and virile" style featured daring chromaticisms, free contrapuntal texture, folklike melody, and contrasting tempos that varied according to the emotional content of the sectional form. Another example of Italian Baroque influence on Bartók occurs in his *Nine Little Piano Pieces* (1926). This is not to imply that Bartók avoided Bach's music as a source of inspiration. The opening bars of the *Cantata Profana* for double mixed chorus, tenor and baritone soloists, and orchestra (1930) were inspired by the beginning portion of Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* (1728–29), and a little work in *Mikrokosmos* has the title, "Hommage à J.S.B."

In 1934 he received permission to transfer from the Academy of Music to the Academy of Sciences in Budapest to prepare for publication the vast collection of Hungarian peasant music he and Kodály had collected. Despite the increasing political tension of the mid-1930s, which greatly troubled this free-thinking champion of the musically oppressed, he was able to produce some of his greatest masterpieces: *String Quartet Nos. 5 and 6; Music for Strings, Percussion and Celesta; Sonata for Two Pianos and Percussion; Violin Concerto No. 2; Contrasts; Divertimento;* and the monumental six-volume series of graded piano pieces, *Mikrokosmos*. A trip to southern Turkey in 1936 resulted in a study of the folk music of Anatolian tribes.

The nazification of Europe and, in 1939, the death of his mother hardened Bartók's determination to leave Hungary. During his second United States concert and lecture tour in April and May of 1940, he discovered the existence of an authentic, recorded collection of Yugoslav music folklore made from 1934 to 1935 by Milman Parry of Harvard. The opportunity had arrived to transcribe and analyze this precious material, thanks to a grant promised by Columbia University. Bartók and his wife Ditta Pásztory-Bartók arrived in New York in October in 1940. He began to transcribe the heroic poems and the women's songs in the Parry Collection in the spring of 1941, and a book-length study of this material was completed in the fall of the next year. During this time he was also preparing the introductory study of his Rumanian folk music collection, which he had brought with him from Hungary. In 1943 he completed his study of the Turkish vocal and instrumental melodies he had collected in Anatolia six years before.

While Bartók was writing his Turkish study he fell ill with leukemia. He was visited by Serge Koussevitzky, conductor of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, who offered him a commission for an orchestral composition. A special grant from the American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers enabled Bartók to convalesce that

summer in Saranac Lake, New York, where he composed his greatest work, the *Concerto for Orchestra*. The extent to which Bartók achieved the synthesis of Eastern folk music materials with Western art music techniques is perhaps best illustrated by this masterpiece, now considered by many to tower above all other twentieth-century compositions. Other commissions followed: the unaccompanied *Violin Sonata* for Yehudi Menuhin and the unfinished *Viola Concerto* for William Primrose (completed posthumously by the late Tibor Serly). Bartók's special legacy for his wife, *Piano Concerto No. 3*, was only seventeen bars from completion when he died on September 26, 1945, in New York's West Side Hospital.

Bartók's transcriptions represent the first of five levels in which folk music sources appear in his compositions. In this level the folk tune is featured as a kind of music "jewel," in which accompaniment, introductions, and other additions are of secondary importance.

The second level expands the invented setting to equalize its importance with the melody. Unification is achieved by deriving the invented material from folk tune characteristics. Examples are apparent in *Eight Hungarian Folk Songs* for voice and piano (1907–1917) and *Three Rondos on Folk Tunes* for piano (1916–1927).

The third level uses the folk tune as a "motto"; that is, the music constructed around the tune is of primary importance. Bartók himself referred to his *Eight Improvisations on Hungarian Peasant Songs* for piano (1920) as reaching "the extreme limit in adding most daring accompaniments to simple folk tunes." Another illustration is melody No. 39 from *Forty-four Duos* for two violins (1931), in which a Serbian dance tune is textured in polyphonic style.

The fourth level is comprised of works that contain folk tune imitations. A particularly appropriate example is *Evening in Transylvania*, originally written for piano solo as No. 5 from *Ten Easy Pieces* (1908) and later orchestrated as the first movement of *Hungarian Sketches* (1931). The first theme is in the rubato (free rhythm) old-Hungarian folk song style; the second theme is in the tempo *giusto* (strict rhythm), new-Hungarian style. Both tunes are linked by the ancient pentatonic scale that the Magyars brought with them in the ninth century when they migrated from Central Asia to the Danube Basin. Imitation of Arab instrumental folk music is represented by the fifth movement of the *Dance Suite* for orchestra (1923); a Slovak folk tune is represented by the first theme of the fourth movement of the *Concerto for Orchestra* (1943), and Rumanian bagpipe music by the fifth movement of the *Concerto*.

The fifth and highest level is reached when the "atmosphere" of folk music—ethnic features of melody, tonality, rhythm, tone color, and form—pervades the composition. This kind of underpinning appears in all of Bartók's abstract works, even in *Sonata No. 2* for violin and piano (1922), in which Bartók thought he was approaching a species of twelve-tone music. This work has traces of old-Hungarian folk music style and, more prevalently, Transylvanian-Rumanian rhythm patterns and melodic configurations.

Other ethnic flavorings are in the third movement of *String Quartet No. 5* (Bulgar-

ian rhythm), the *Dance Suite* (Ukrainian *Kolomyjka* dance rhythm), the second movement of the *Concerto for Orchestra* (Yugoslav *Kolo* dance style), and No. 151 from *Mikrokosmos*. (Bartók commented that it has an American folk song feeling, with Gershwin-style tonality, rhythm, and color.)

Recent musicological studies show that Bartók developed for his personal use a new theory of music based on an abstract system of pitch relations derived from East European folk modes. It therefore seems reasonable to predict that in the twenty-first century Bartókian theory will have the same impact on music composition as Arnold Schoenberg's theory of serialism has had.

Benjamin Franklin and Other Early American Music Critics

by Gordon Myers
NATS Bulletin
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While Benjamin Franklin was living in London, his brother sent him a song for which he had written the words. Franklin, in his reply, made some suggestions to his brother, but then seized upon the opportunity to take verbal swings at one of England's foremost composers of the century, George Frederick Handel. Franklin sprinkled his perceptive and educated observations with a pinch of his own brand of peppered humor. He made a number of pertinent points, however, which may prove helpful today to composers and singers of songs.

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Franklin died on April 17, 1970, and his letter appeared in the July 1790 issue of the *Massachusetts Magazine*.

CRITICISM on MUSICK

Letter from Dr. B. Franklin, to Mr. P. Franklin, at Newport.

Dear Brother,

I like your ballad very well, and I think it well adapted for your purpose of discouraging expensive foppery, and encouraging industry and frugality. If you can get it generally sung in your country, it may probably have a good deal of the effect you hope and expect from it. But as you aimed at making it general, I wonder you chose so uncommon a measure in poetry, that none of the tunes in common use will suit it. Had you fitted it to an old one, well known, it must have spread much faster than I doubt it will do from the best new tune we can get composed for it. I think too, that if you had given it to some country girl in the heart of Massachusetts, who has never heard any other than Psalm tunes or *Chevy Chase, The Children in the Wood, The Spanish Lady*, and such old simple ditties, but has naturally a good ear, she might more probably have made a pleasing popular tune for you, than any of our masters here, and more proper for your purpose, which would best be answered, if every word as it is sung be understood by all that hear it, and if the emphasis you intend for particular words could be given by the singer as well as by the reader; much of the force and impression of the song depending on those circumstances. I

will however get it as well done for you as I can.

Do not imagine that I mean to depreciate the skill of our composers of musick here; they are admirable at pleasing practised ears, and know how to delight one another; but in composing for songs the reigning taste seems to be quite out of nature, or rather the reverse of nature, and yet like a torrent, hurries them all away with it; one or two perhaps only excepted.

You, in the spirit of some ancient legislators, would influence the manners of your country by the united powers of poetry and musick. By what I can learn of their songs, the musick was simple, conformed itself to the usual pronunciation of words, as to measure, cadence, or emphasis, etc., never disguised, or confounded the language by making a long syllable short, or a short one long, when sung; their singing was only more pleasing, because a melodious manner of speaking; it was capable of all the graces of prose oratory, while it added the pleasure of harmony.

A modern song on the contrary, neglects all the proprieties and beauties of common speech, and in their place introduces its defects and absurdities as so many graces. I am afraid you will hardly take my word for this, and therefore I must endeavor to support it by proof. Here is the first song I lay my hand on. It happens to be a composition of one of our greatest masters, the ever famous Handel. It is not one of his juvenile performances, before his taste could be formed and improved. It appeared when his reputation was at the highest, is greatly admired by all his admirers, and is really excellent in its kind. It is called, the additional Favourite Song in *Judas Maccabeus*. Now I reckon among the defects and improprieties of common speech, the following, viz.

1. Wrong placing the accent, or emphasis; by laying it on words of no importance, or on wrong syllables.
2. Drawling; or extending the sound of words, or syllables beyond their natural length.
3. Stuttering; or making many syllables of one.
4. Unintelligibleness; the result of the three forgoing united.
5. Tautology; and,
6. Screaming, without cause.

Here are four syllables made of one, and eight of three, but this is moderate. I have seen in another song that I cannot now find, seventeen syllables made of three, and sixteen of one; the latter I remember was the word charms: viz. Cha, a,a,a,a,a,a,a,a,a,a,a,a,a,a, arms—stammering with a witness!

For the unintelligibleness; give this whole song to any taught singer, and let her sing it to any company that have never heard it before; and you will find that they will not understand three words in ten. It is therefore that at the oratorios and operas, one sees with books in their hands all those who desire to understand what they hear sung by even our best performers. I send you enclosed the song with its musick. Read the words without the repetitions. Observe how few they are, and what a shower of notes attend them. You will then perhaps be inclined to think with

me, that though the words might be the principal part of an ancient song, they are of small importance in a modern one; they are in short only a pretence for singing.

I might have mentioned inarticulation among the defects of common speech that are assumed as beauties in modern singing; but as that seemed more the fault of the singer than of the composer, I omitted it in what related merely to the composition.

For the tautology, you have, with their vain mysterious art, twice repeated; magick charms can ne'er relieve you, three times. Nor can heal the wounded heart, three times; godlike wisdom from above, twice; and this alone can ne'er deceive you, two or three times. But this is reasonable when compared with the monster Polypheme, the monster Polypheme, a hundred times over, and over, in his admired Acis and Galatea.

As to the screaming; perhaps I cannot find a fair instance in this song, but whoever has frequented our operas will remember many. And yet here methinks the words *no* and *e'er,* when sung to the notes, have a little of the air of screaming, and would actually be screamed by some singers.

The fine singer, in the present mode, stifles all the hard consonants and polishes away all the rougher parts of words that serve to distinguish them one from another; so that you hear nothing but an admirable pipe, and understand no more of the song than you would from its tune played on any other instrument. If ever it was the ambition of musicians to make instruments that should imitate the human voice, that ambition is now reversed, the voice aiming to be like an instrument. Thus wigs were first made to imitate a good natural head of hair, but when they became fashionable, tho in unnatural forms, we have seen natural hair dressed to look like wigs!

The *Massachusetts Magazine* began publication in Boston, January 1, 1789. Benjamin Franklin's letter was written before his brother Peter's death, which occurred in 1766. Editors of *The Papers of Benjamin Franklin* (Yale University Press) state that the original manuscript copy of the letter has not been found. The letter was included in an earlier volume published in London in 1769, entitled *Experiments and Observations on Electricity . . . To Which are added Letters and Papers on Philosophical Subjects*. It is probable that the Editors of the *Massachusetts Magazine* discovered the letter while searching for materials of a scientific nature tc be published in its pages. The 1769 London publication would have had plenty of time to find its way into many private and public libraries in America by 1790.

Benjamin Franklin was not America's first music critic, by any means. There had been widespread concern for many decades regarding the bad singing that was occurring in churches. For example, the quality of psalm singing in America during the 1600s had deteriorated. Just how bad it had come to be is reflected in the introduction to Rev. Thomas Walter's *The Grounds and Rules of Musick Explained* (Boston, 1721). He wrote:

. . . (the tunes) are now miserably tor-

> tured and twisted and quavered, in some churches, into a horrid medly of confused and disorderly noises . . . a most disagreeable jar in the ears of all that can judge better of singing than these men, who please themselves with their own ill-sounding echoes . . Our tunes are . . . left to the mercy of every unskilled throat, to chop and alter, twist and change, according to their infinitely divers, and no less odd humours and fancies.

A joke popular in the eighteenth century suggests support for Rev. Walter's description: "Sam Foote, being in a church, where the singing was performed in a wretched manner, observed to Mr. Quin, that the Prophesy of Amos was now fulfilled, where he said, 'And the songs of the Temple shall be bawlings.'" (The quote is from Amos 8:3. In my Bible the word is "howlings" instead of "bawlings.")

Rev. John Tufts, also of Boston, set out about the same time as did Thomas Walter to teach the members of his congregation to read music, in order that the singing in church services might be "regulated." His *A Very Plain and Easy Introduction to the Singing of Psalm Tunes* was published in 1726 (Gilbert Chase writes ". . . may have been issued around 1714, though no edition earlier than the fifth [1726] has been located") and would allow the congregants to sing their hymns and psalms to new tunes and melodies at sight. A controversy developed between the advocates of "regular" or the "regulated way" of singing from notes and those who preferred the "old way."

Rev. Thomas Symmes of Bradford, Mass. published two sermons on the subject of learning to read notes and improving the quality of singing. The first, given in 1720, was called *Reasonableness of Regular Singing*. Among other things, he said:

> We are well informed, that in other countries where *Singing Schools* are kept up, Singing is continued in the purity of it: Where they are not it is degenerated as it is among us . . .
>
> Singing is as truly an art of science, as Arithmetic, Geometry, etc. It has certain and plain rules by which it is taught, and without conforming to them, there is no true Singing . . .

The Rev. Mr. Symmes went so far as to dream a little!

> If all in this Province who can never learn one tune in the usual way, would industriously apply themselves to learn to sing by note, and in order to that, furnish themselves with *Singing-books*, and go to a *Skilfull* Singer for instructions, it is thought by a very moderate computation, that in one year's time, more than *Ten-Thousand* persons might learn to sing *Psalm-tunes*, with considerable *skill* and *exactness*, and of the *rising generation* yearly more than a Thousand. And it is not a little thing to have so many voices employed in singing God's praises skilfully in the public, and to have *Thousands* of families enabled to practice this duty in their houses, who now omit it for want of a skill.

Resistance to change seemed to have been as prevalent in colonial times as it is today. Historian George Hood in his *History of*

Music in New England (1846) listed ten principal objections which were set forth to oppose this new or "regular way" of singing:

1. That it was a new way—an unknown tongue.
2. That it was not so melodious as the usual way.
3. That there were so many tunes, one could never learn them.
4. That the new way made disturbance in churches, grieved good men, exasperated them and caused them to behave disorderly.
5. That it was popish.
6. That it would introduce instruments.
7. That the names of the notes were blasphemous.
8. That it was needless, the old way being good enough.
9. That it was only a contrivance to get money.
10. That it required too much time to learn it, made the young disorderly, and kept them from the proper influence of the family, etc.

Dr. Cotton Mather joined the fray. In 1721 he published an essay entitled *Accomplished Singer*. He made some points strongly in favor of improving the singing in churches:

> It has been found accordingly in some of our congregations, that in length of time, their singing has degenerated into an odd noise . . .
>
> And they must have strange emotions of the Divine Spirit, and of his operations, who shall imagine, that the delight which their untuned ears take in an uncouth noise, more than in Regular singing, is any communion with Him. The skill of Regular Singing, is among the gifts of God unto the children of men, and by no means unthankfully to be neglected or despised . . .
>
> We ought certainly to serve our God with the best, and Regular Singing must needs be better than the confused noise of a Wilderness. God is not for confusion in the Churches of his Saints; but requires, Let all things be done decently . . .
>
> The tunes commonly used in our churches are few; it were well if there were more . . . It is to be desired, that we may see in the rising generation, a fresh and strong disposition to learn the proper tunes; that God may be glorified, and religion beautiful, with Regular Singing among us . . .

The efforts of these talented and courageous men paid off. The Singing School emerged and was prominent in colonial life in the new United States; in many areas of the country it survived and thrived throughout the nineteenth century. The clergymen and the singing school masters who taught people to read music and to sing did a monumental job in shaping a tradition for song in America.

Many of the thoughts and ideas set down by composers, teachers, and singing masters active through the 1700s indicate a high degree of musical and cultural development. William Billings—who some say had a terrible voice, loved music, and composed some 250 hymn-tunes and over 50 anthems for the

church—wrote near the front of his *Singing Master's Assistant* in 1778: "Great art thou, O Music! And with thee there is no Competitor. . . Thou art as early as the Creation, for when the foundation of the earth was laid, the morning stars sang together, and shouted for joy!"

Oliver Brownson, composer and singing teacher, and compiler of *Select Harmony* (1783), stated: "There are several graces in music . . . the principal grace that can be used in common schools, is to sing with ease and life, and with hearts deeply affected with a sense of the great truths we utter. Music thus performed, of all things on earth, bears the nearest resemblance to the employment of heaven."

Simeon Jocelin's *The Chorister's Companion* was printed in New Haven in 1788. He quoted from Harrison's *Sacred Harmony* when he instructed his students: "Divine Song is undoubtedly the language of nature . . . when the union of heart and voice is . . . happily arranged . . . the soul forgets her confinement with the body, is elevated beyond the cares and tumults of this mortal state, and seems for a while transported to the blissful regions of perfect love and joy."

Jacob Kimball, trained to be a lawyer in metropolitan Boston, quit the legal field to go into music. His collection of hymns and anthems published in 1793 was entitled *The Rural Harmony*. He suggested that ". . . a performer should endeavor to form a proper idea of the author's design in a piece of music, and his own judgment and taste must be his principal directors in doing justice to it . . . The voice, the looks, the gestures of the performers, are severally necessary to give music its full energy, and are respectively the sources of pleasure or disgust to the observing hearer."

Jonathan Huntington, another New England composer, teacher, and compiler, published his *Apolla Harmony* in 1807. In its preface, he included the following advice: "When we attempt to teach the youth to sing praises to God, we should first look into our own hearts and see whether there be the true spirit of praise in us—If we have it, we can convey in some measure our ideas to others."

Elias Mann, considered a master teacher in his day, and famous for a little song called "The Grasshopper," published his *Northampton Collection of Sacred Harmony* in 1793. He philosophized in the opening section of his book: ". . . moreover, not only the voice, but whole dimeanor should conform to the subject; for it is vain to expect that sensibility will be excited in others which is wanting in ourselves."

And although William Billings' fuguing tunes were popular to the ears of most during those days, Elias Mann expressed a strong dislike for them. His posture regarding Billings was reminiscent of Franklin toward the music of Handel. In 1807, Mann wrote in the introduction to his *Massachusetts Collection of Sacred Harmony:* "In this Collection will be found none of those wild fugues, and rapid and confused movements, which have so long been the disgrace of congregational psalmody, and the contempt of the judicious and tasteful amateur."

While many of us may not agree with Benjamin Franklin's comments regarding music written by the great Handel, most of us can see validity in the critical points he makes. And there are those today who

would agree with Elias Mann regarding the fuging tunes of William Billings.

And if the Reverends Walters and Tufts had not been critical of the bad singing they heard in their churches, the great tradition of the Singing School in America might not have had such an early beginning.

I suspect that criticism and evaluation of our early musical life is just as much a part of our musical "roots" as the musical development itself. And because of that tradition, established early on, we are free today to pick and choose for ourselves. We are free to praise a performance or to criticize it; we are free to choose to listen to beautiful music or to "Let horrid Jargon split the Air" as Billings wrote in his *The Singing Master's Assistant* (1778); and we are free to become music lovers or to disregard it.

The editor of *The Songster's Museum—or, a Trip to Elysium,* published in 1803, must have chosen to become a music lover. On the title page he printed a quotation credited to the Frenchman Lavater. It's good advice for all of us. *"Keep him at least three paces distant who hates music!"*

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Samuel Barber: The Last Interview and the Legacy, Part I

by Allan Kozinn
High Fidelity
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"I think I'm a country person. Most everything I've composed, I've composed in the country, and the pieces I've written in the city have generally been started in the country. I'm sure you've noticed that I haven't been notably productive since I moved to New York. Like Messiaen, I like birds. And I need the absolute silence of the country. I need places to walk. Now I can walk through Central Park, but it isn't the same. I've tried to analyze it, but to my mind, it's just not as satisfying. It isn't really natural woods."

The speaker was Samuel Barber, one of the most celebrated composers this country has produced. Like Aaron Copland, Virgil Thomson, Elliott Carter, William Schuman, and others of that golden generation that came to prominence during the first three decades of this century, Barber was intent on showing the world that serious composition was not an exclusively European art form. He also firmly believed that new music need not be forbidding, and by writing in a Romantic, accessible idiom, he built a large international audience for his own work and for American music in general.

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Barber died of cancer on January 23, a little more than a month before his seventy-first birthday. The comments about city life's dearth of inspiring charms, as well as those that follow, were part of what turned out to be his last formal interview, granted in December 1979. He had by then composed all he was destined to, although he maintained that he would be writing again as soon as he found a way of keeping the intrusive city noise out of his workroom. The day of the interview, in fact, he had a team of workmen building soundproof walls in his Fifth Avenue apartment, one of several attempts to solve this problem.

Of course, the increasing severity of Barber's illness—which he would not publicly admit was anything serious—took at least as great a toll on his composing as did the lack of country quiet. As he pointed out, his output had indeed been slim in recent years: There were the Three Songs, Op. 45, in 1974; the revision of his second opera, *Antony and Cleopatra*, in 1975; the short Ballade for solo piano in 1977; and the Third *Essay for Orchestra* in 1978. The New York Philharmonic, which gave the Third *Essay* its premiere, had also commissioned an oboe concerto, scheduled for early 1979, but Barber laid this work aside after completing only one movement.

According to an early biography, Nathan Broder's *Samuel Barber* (G. Schirmer, 1954; out of print), the composer was shy, withdrawn, and moody as a young man; those traits endured, and perhaps intensified, as he grew older. He was, I was told before meeting him, "absolutely brilliant and funny as hell—but an *impossible* man." I was also told that he did not enjoy long conversations

with strangers, particularly journalists. He had, therefore, originally canceled our interview, as well as most of his other appointments, and was refusing at the time to see anyone but his closest friends. It was one of the latter, pianist and composer Phillip Ramey, who persuaded Barber to keep our appointment. And so, on a brisk, cloudy morning, Barber turned up at the offices of his publisher, G. Schirmer, looking healthy and apparently in good spirits. He answered questions for about an hour and a half, and then, as we parted, he asked, "What do you think—did I give you any good *lines*?"

If there was one thing the interview had plenty of, it was good lines. Barber was clearly not given to lengthy and serious rhetorical pronouncements about the meaning and purpose of music; nor was he interested in predicting where current compositional trends might lead. He refused to speak analytically about his music or his style, and when he discussed his work at all, it was in general and usually anecdotal terms. Otherwise, he seemed happy to sit back and play the role of the cantankerous elder statesman, musing pointedly about the music world's shortcomings.

I reminded him, for instance, of a statement he had made to *Musical America* in 1935, when he won his first Pulitzer traveling scholarship. "The present offers fine opportunities for young composers," the twenty-five-year-old Barber had said. "The public seems ready to encourage native talent, and if composers are ready to do their part and offer something worthwhile, American music may surely be expected to make great progress." What, I wondered, did Barber think of the prospects for young composers in the 1980s?

"Oh, I think, it's much harder. First of all, there were conductors who were interested in American music in those days. Koussevitzky, for example. When young conductors tell me they have trouble putting together interesting programs, I tell them to look at the Koussevitzky/Boston Symphony programs. They were superb—much better than Toscanini's. They had the classics, the Romantics, and almost every program had an American work. He was very enthusiastic about American music, and he played it beautifully. For a composer, it all hinges on enthusiastic conductors. But that's all gone now. Why? Well, don't ask *me*—why don't you go ask Mr. Muti? He came here to take a nice American post and announced in a *New York Times* interview that he's never conducted an American work in his life. Well, that's the end of us in Philadelphia. My hometown. Will he come around once he's on the Philadelphia podium? I rather doubt it. It seems many of today's young conductors are too lazy to learn new things. And it's not only laziness: They are not at all convinced that new music is any good. Therefore, new works only get done when the wives of the composers pressure the members of an orchestra's board to have certain works played. That's why I think all composers should get married as early as possible."

Barber himself never married, but his music has found plenty of champions. Virtually from the start, it brought him the popular and financial success that allowed him to forgo academic and other extracompositional occupations. In 1928, at eighteen, he entered a violin sonata (unpublished) in a compo-

sition contest and won the first of several substantial prizes and grants that put him in the enviable position of being able to spend every summer from his late teens through his late twenties touring Europe and composing. The Philadelphia Orchestra performed his first orchestral score, *The School for Scandal* Overture, when he was twenty-three, and two years later, in 1935, his *Music for a Scene from Shelley* was performed by the New York Philharmonic. The same year Barber won the Prix de Rome and made his recording debut as both composer and baritone, singing his *Dover Beach* for the Victor microphones. In 1937, Artur Rodzinski gave the American premiere of the First Symphony with the Cleveland Orchestra, repeating it that summer in Salzburg. And in 1938, Arturo Toscanini added his seal of approval, leading the NBC Symphony Orchestra in the first performances of the First *Essay* and the work that became not only Barber's best-known score, but one of the most frequently played of all twentieth-century orchestral works, the *Adagio for Strings*.

The urge to compose hit Barber early. He was born in West Chester, Pennsylvania, in 1910 took his first piano lessons when he was six, and began composing at seven. Evidently without much encouragement, his compositional drive flowered quietly until, at age nine, he left his mother a letter that read, "I have written this to tell you my worrying secret. No don't cry when you read it because it is neither yours or my fault [sic]. I suppose I have to tell it now without any nonsense. To begin with, I was not meant to be an athlet [sic]. I was meant to be a composer, and will be I'm sure. Don't ask me to try to forget this unpleasant thing and go play football—Please—Sometimes I've been worrying about this so much it makes me mad (not very)."

A closet composer no more, Barber continued his musical studies on his own, attempting an opera when he was ten (called *The Rose Tree*, to a libretto by the family cook). In 1924, the Curtis Institute was founded, and Barber, then fourteen, went to Philadelphia as one of the conservatory's 357 charter students to study piano, voice, and composition. There in 1928, he met another composition student, Gian Carlo Menotti, and the two entered upon a lifelong friendship. They traveled around Europe together through the 1930s and eventually (from 1943 to 1974) shared a large woodland estate called Capricorn, near Mount Kisco, New York. Many of Barber's finest scores were composed in the countrified seclusion of Capricorn, and it was there that he and Menotti collaborated on a couple of stage works (Menotti supplying the librettos): Barber's first opera, *Vanessa* (1957), and a ten-minute "chamber opera," *A Hand of Bridge* (1959).

In January 1934, in Vienna, Barber made his debut as a conductor, a sideline he gave up happily in the early 1950s, soon after making a short series of "Barber Conducts Barber" recordings. Why did he stop? "Because on stage I had about as much projection as a baby skunk. Projection, nerves—and I got bored of rehearsing my own music. Some composers just adore it, but I don't find it very interesting. There's a lack, in me, of pedagogical talent. And when you're guest-conducting, either you have to have that talent or else you have to have an authority over the orchestra to make them do it

right. Guest conductors rarely have that authority, whereas if it's your own orchestra, you can just do what Toscanini did: You can scream, *'Stupidi! Imbecille!'*, and throw down your watch. I've seen him do that. But he was Toscanini, and it was his orchestra; they wouldn't *dare* make the mistakes with him that they did with me.

"Oh, I suppose there's something to be gained from hearing a composer conduct his own work. My tempos could be definitive. But generally, I don't believe composers make very good conductors. Someone who conducts every day can give a technically superior performance. I remember the last work of mine I conducted: my Second Symphony with the Boston Symphony. Not a bad way to end a conducting career. But by the time I got to Boston, I'd conducted it in Denmark and in England, and I knew exactly where the violas were going to be wrong, and where I'd have to make them do it over and over, very slowly. Now how can you remain interested in doing that, whether it's your own music or not?"

Not the gregarious type, Barber was a less vociferous public campaigner for the cause of new American music than Copland, Schuman, and Leonard Bernstein have been. However, he did occasionally take a stand, serving briefly as president of the International Music Council of UNESCO and, in 1952, joining a group of his fellow composers in a successful campaign to win a larger allotment of royalties for serious composers from ASCAP. Now and then, he even came up with a plan to encourage younger composers. One such scheme involved the commission for *Summer Music* (1956), by the Chamber Music Society of Detroit. He had agreed to set aside his usual fee, accepting instead the proceeds of a "pay what you can" collection among the audience, most of the contributions falling between $1.00 and $5.00.

"The idea," he recalled, "was that, if this caught on, music societies around the country would take up similar collections and use the funds to commission young local composers who needed experience and exposure. I made a speech against myself, essentially, telling them it was crazy that they didn't use local composers. It was certainly done in Bach's day. But they didn't like that idea. They just wanted the same tired old names—Copland, Sessions, Harris, me—so it never got off the ground. Consequently, not only are young composers still not getting the commissions, but the prices for new works are staying rather high. In fact, I've done my best to increase them. Which I guess ruins my story."

He was able to increase those fees—to a level that was reportedly the highest in the country—primarily because he was able to produce music that audiences consistently enjoyed. His conception of the ideal American idiom differed considerably from those of his peers, and he seems not to have been touched by the need to keep up with experimental and stylistic trends. In the 1940s, when the predominant American style emphasized the rediscovery of nationalistic musical roots, Barber's major works—the Violin Concerto (1939–40), the Second *Essay* (1942), the *Capricorn Concerto* (1944), and the Cello Concerto (1945)—reflected an impulse to continue developing in his own direction rather than turn to folk tunes for raw material. When the compositional world

dove headlong into atonality, serialism, and a host of other experimental, intellectual forms in the 1950s and 60s, he proceeded along his own lyrical and often intensely subjective path, veering moderately toward a more chromatic, angular, and dramatic language.

Thomson, in his book *American Music since 1910*, calls Barber "a reactionary," and that may be. He was not, certainly, the kind of composer we would call a daring trailblazer; yet the widespread impression that all his music aspires to the simplicity of the *Adagio for Strings* is quite wide of the mark. Of course, his conservatism may be vindicated by the fact that many composers in the two succeeding generations have opted to follow in his neo-Romantic footsteps, some with a good deal of popular, commercial, and even critical success. All the same, one can't help but wonder how Barber was able to witness the intense swirling of styles, forms, and media of the last fifty years without being tempted—as were Stravinsky and Copland—to dabble on the experimental fringes. So I asked him.

"Ah, I was waiting for this," he replied. "Why haven't I changed? Why *should* I? There's no reason music should be difficult for an audience to understand, is there? Not that I necessarily address the audience when I compose or, for that matter, the players. Or posterity. I write for the present, and I write for myself. Myself and Helen [Mrs. Elliott] Carter. Why Helen Carter? Well, she's the judge. She announced once that all American composers are dead except for Elliott, so we have to take our music to her, and she tells us what to do.

"I think that most music that is really good will be appreciated by the audience, ultimately. I can't say I listen to much new music now, though. I know a few names, I've heard a few recordings; but no, I don't want to suggest which of today's composers will be the big names of the future. I'm not a necromancer, you know. Anyway, this is a question for the musicologists. They know *everything*."

"The recording situation is miserable and getting worse," Barber observed. "I wish—I think all composers wish—that a certain amount of money could be put aside by foundations for the recording of good first performances of new works. And then those recordings should be distributed well—not just to schools and libraries. That's not enough. That specialty approach doesn't give the music any exposure. They should be distributed by the major companies, so that people can find them and hear them and so that young musicians can listen to them and decide whether they want to perform the music themselves. There are a lot of things that might be changed in the musical world, if we got down to the nitty-gritty."

There are indeed, and Barber's wish seems more remote all the time. But in truth, he could not justifiably complain about his own representation on discs. Of his forty-seven works with opus numbers (some of which he withdrew in fits of self-criticism) and his handful of unnumbered scores, virtually all have been recorded at least once.

The following discography is arranged chronologically within genres, except for the vocal music, where couplings suggested a different approach. Details of the recordings discussed are listed at the end of each sec-

tion. Where discs contain works by other composers, evaluations are confined to those of Barber.

The Serenade, Op. 1 (1929) might appropriately have been grouped with the chamber works, since it is designated "for string quartet or string orchestra"; yet all the available recordings present it in its orchestral guise. It is a vibrant neoclassical work in three movements, the last a spirited dance. Vladimir Golschmann and the Symphony of the Air give a thoroughly respectable reading on an all-Barber disc (Vanguard VSD 2083), but the version by Gerard Schwarz and the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra (Nonesuch D 79002) is slightly preferable for its more exciting pacing, more sensitive balancing of the string lines, and (digital) sonic transparency. Both accounts move rather quickly, emphasizing the agitation and energy in the score. Nicolas Flagello and the Rome Chamber Orchestra (Peters International PLE 059) take a slower, broader approach, sacrificing vigor in favor of a somewhat exaggerated elegance.

The School for Scandal Overture, Op. 5 (1931), and *Music for a Scene from Shelley*, Op. 7 (1933) were composed during two of Barber's summer sojourns in Italy and were both inspired by literary works—the overture by Sheridan's eighteenth-century farce, *Shelley* by *Prometheus Unbound*, Act II, Scene 5. The overture is the more gripping piece, its insistent tempos and brash, tonally disoriented sections contrasting with moments of quiet, pastoral D major melody, all packed into about seven and a half minutes. Barber was intent on showing his mastery of orchestral hues in this early work, and the brilliance with which he succeeded is best heard on an excellent, budget-priced all-Barber LP by Thomas Schippers and the New York Philharmonic (Odyssey Y 33230). The Howard Hanson/Eastman-Rochester recording, at midprice (Mercury SRI 75012), is an earnest yet unfocused reading—no real alternative. *Shelley* is more subdued, both orchestrationally and thematically, and certainly the most introspective and mysterious of Barber's early scores. There are two excellent recordings available: a smooth reading by Golschmann (Vanguard) and a marginally crisper one by David Measham and the West Australian Symphony (Unicorn UNS 256).

Thomson may have had Barber's First Symphony, Op. 9 (1935–36) in mind when he labeled him a reactionary. The only hint that the work was composed in this century is its theme—pure Puccini. Touches of Tchaikovsky shine through, too, with nothing to suggest that this is the work of an American. To some listeners, all this may sound appealing, and the work is attractive, impassioned in places, and finely crafted throughout. Hanson (Mercury SRI 75012) is sympathetic, but his orchestra plays messily. Much better are the more accurate and incisive Kenneth Schermerhorn / Milwaukee Symphony (Turnabout TVS 34564) and Measham/London Symphony (Unicorn RHS 342) readings.

"Sometimes I get tired of hearing the *Adagio for Strings*," said Barber about his most famous work, which first appeared as the second movement of the String Quartet, Op. 11 (1936). "But I amuse myself during performances, because I *know* there's going to be a mistake somewhere; I just wait for it to happen. It's such an easy work, they nev-

er bother rehearsing it. And orchestra psychology is rather funny: When they see whole notes, they think, 'Oh, we don't have to watch the conductor.' Invariably, a viola or a second violin will make a mistake. Happens every time."

Splicing technique has shielded us from those errors, by and large, yet the variety of interpretive approaches to this simple work is incredible. If you want merely a facile lushness, you can't go wrong with Eugene Ormandy/Philadelphia (CBS MS 6224). Bernstein, too, basks in a thick string sound, but he takes the work at a snail's pace, leading the New York Philharmonic through a flabby, distended performance (CBS M 30573). I Musici (Philips Festivo 6570 181) takes it at a more sensible clip, but the string playing is unconscionably rough. The Neville Marriner/Academy version (Argo ZRG 845) is thoughtful and well paced, beginning soft and slow, steadily building in intensity. If you can find it, the historic Toscanini/NBC Symphony rendering from 1942 (RCA LM 7032) is a gem in every sense; of the available recordings, the Charles Munch/Boston (RCA AGL 1–3790) comes closest both to Toscanini's velvety, flawless string tone and to his brisk, no-nonsense tempo. A sterling *Adagio* in an all-Barber setting is the Schippers on Odyssey.

The *Essays* No. 1, Op. 12 (1937), and No. 2, Op. 17 (1942) are among Barber's most immediately engaging scores. Aptly titled explorations of orchestral sonorities, each grows from the simplest kernel of musical thought and moves from a somber, questioning mood through a contrapuntally playful one to a resounding full-orchestra climax. The only available recording of the First *Essay* is the Measham/London Symphony (Unicorn RHS 342), a tight reading that, unfortunately, is not equaled by the performance of the Second *Essay* on the same disc. Here, Measham's detailwork —for instance, his emphasis of the woodwind triplets accompanying the melodic exchange between the violas and oboes early on—is often insightful, yet the performance is marred by some awkwardly broad tempos. The Schippers (Odyssey) is better, if not as sharply detailed, but there is a recording flaw (oxide dropout?) at the climatic Più tranquillo. Thus, the best representation of the work is Golschmann's quick-moving, finely detailed performance (Vanguard), almost Wagnerian in scope and well recorded.

Between the two *Essays* came the Violin Concerto, Op. 14 (1939–40), a work that gave Barber a good deal of trouble. It was commissioned by a soap manufacturer for a young violinist who complained first that the opening two movements were not sufficiently showy, and later that the perpetual motion finale was unplayable. It's playable, of course, and the work as a whole is drenched in a sugary romanticism that certainly supports an emphasis on sweetness of tone, as in the Ronald Thomas/Measham recording (Unicorn UNS 256). But Isaac Stern's more biting, virtuosic rendering is more to the point. He digs solidly into the strings yet conveys tonal warmth; his passagework is cleaner and more logically phrased; and he benefits from a sharply etched orchestral accompaniment from Bernstein and the New York Philharmonic (CBS MS 6713).

From 1943 to 1945, Barber was an Air Force corporal, and he dutifully devoted

some of his musical energies to the war effort. The *Commando* March (1943) is a superfluous patriotic footlifter, hardly worth bothering with. But if you must, at least go for the bright, brassy sonics of the Frederick Fennell/Cleveland Symphonic Winds digital version (Telarc DG 10043).

Barber's other wartime effort is the Second Symphony, Op. 19 (1944). The Air Force commissioned this work, allowed him to work on it at Capricorn, and even flew him from one air base to another so he could gather atmosphere. With greater reliance on dissonance and modernistic rhythmic irregularity than any previous Barber score, the work seemed to signal a new direction. In the early 1960s, though, Barber withdrew the symphony, saying only that "it wasn't very good." From the recording he made with the New Symphony Orchestra of London in 1950 (Everest 3282), it's easy to see why: Although it has its thrilling moments and is, for Barber, adventurous, it's too densely packed and lacks cohesiveness. He discarded the outer movements and published a revised Andante, called *Night Flight*, Op. 19a. The Measham/London Symphony recording (Unicorn RHS 342) conveys the night flyer's loneliness that informs this bleak tone painting.

Overt lyricism returns in the *Capricorn Concerto*, for flute, oboe, trumpet, and strings, Op. 21 (1944), and the Cello Concerto, Op. 22 (1945), a pair of works that mix the rhythmic and harmonic simplicity of the violin concerto with touches of the Second Symphony's more sophisticated jaggedness. *Capricorn* is a light-textured work, full of an almost tactile weaving of string and solo instrument lines and containing a few passing nods to Copland's works of the same period, particularly in the last movement. The Hanson recording (Mercury SRI 75049) serves the score well, but surely it's time for an alternative release of this delightful work. The cello concerto, a deeper, more trenchant composition, is available in two authoritative if aging versions—the 1966 recording by the cellist who gave the work its premiere, Raya Garbousova, with Frederic Waldman and Musica Aeterna (Varèse Sarabande VCS 81057), and Zara Nelsova's 1950 disc, with Barber conducting (Decca Eclipse import ECS 707).

Barber gave most of his attention in the 1950s to stage works, and when he returned to orchestral writing with the *Toccata festiva*, Op. 36, and *Die Natali*, Op. 37 (both 1960), it was with a new outlook. *Toccata festiva* is a single-movement organ concerto, surging with energy and richly chromatic; the highlight is a tough cadenza for pedals alone. Although the recorded sound of the E. Power Biggs/Ormandy recording (CBS MS 6398) is rather dry, the playing is first-rate (and there are no alternatives). *Die Natali*, on the other hand, is an extended fantasy on Christmas carols and therefore aspires to a certain festive charm. But given the subject matter, the dense scoring seems heavy-handed, and the work, recorded by Jorge Mester and the Louisville Orchestra (Louisville LS 745) is one of Barber's least satisfying.

The Pulitzer Prize-winning Piano Concerto, Op. 38 (1962), shows Barber again in top form. The piano writing in the fast movements is spectacular, and the orchestral accompaniment is often hard-driving, incisive, and brilliantly hued, its acridity set off

by stretches of melodic beauty. John Browning gave the premiere performance, and he had the work solidly in his fingers by the time he recorded it with George Szell in 1964—a performance (CBS MS 6638) yet unequaled on disc. The budget price of the competing version by Abbott Ruskin and David Epstein (Turnabout QTVS 34683) may be tempting, but the distantly miked, overly ambient sound is horrid. The Browning/Szell is well worth the difference in price, and if you seek out the British import version (CBS 61621), you can get it coupled with the Stern/Bernstein recording of the violin concerto.

Barber's last finished work was the Third *Essay*, Op. 47 (1978); it begins with some strong, colorful ideas but soon loses energy and direction, leaving its promise unfulfilled. Zubin Mehta and the New York Philharmonic gave a good account of the work (New World NW 309).

Of Barber's orchestral works, only the *Fadograph of a Yestern Scene*, Op. 44 (1971), and the Canzonetta movement (1978) from the unfinished oboe concerto have not been recorded.

[In the list that follows, performing groups are indicated with appropriate combinations of P (Philharmonic), S (Symphony), C (Chamber), and O (Orchestra). Where a set includes more than one disc, the number is given parenthetically following the record number.]

Vanguard VSD 2083—Serenade, Op. 1; *Music for a Scene from Shelley*, Op. 7; *Essay for Orchestra*, No. 2, Op. 17; *A Stopwatch and an Ordnance Map*, Op. 15 (with Robert de Cormier Chorale); *A Hand of Bridge*, Op. 35 (with Neway, Alberts Lewis, Maero). S of the Air, Golschmann.

Nonesuch D 79002—Serenade, Op. 1, Los Angeles CO, Schwarz. (Also works by Carter, Diamond, Fine.)

Peters International PLE 059—Serenade, Op. 1. Rome CO, Flagello. (Also works by Diamond, R. Green, D. Wilson.)

Odyssey Y 33230—*The School for Scandal* Overture, Op. 5; *Adagio for Strings*, Op. 11; *Essay for Orchestra*, No. 2, Op. 17; *Medea's Meditation and Dance of Vengeance*, Op. 23a. New York P, Schippers.

Mercury SRI 75012—*The School for Scandal* Overture, Op. 5; Symphony No. 1, Op. 9; *Medea*, Op. 23; Suite. Eastman-Rochester SO, Hanson.

Unicorn UNS 256—*Music for a Scene from Shelley*, Op. 7; Violin Concerto, Op. 14 (with Thomas); *Knoxville: Summer of 1915*, Op. 24 (with McGurk). West Australian SO, Measham.

Turnabout TVS 34564—Symphony No. 1, Op. 9. Milwaukee SO, Schermerhorn. (Also Mayer: *Octagon*, with Masselos.)

Unicorn RHS 342—Symphony No. 1, Op.9; *Night Flight*, Op. 19a; *Essays for Orchestra:* No. 1, Op. 12; No. 2, Op. 17. London SO, Measham.

CBS MS 6224—*Adagio for Strings*, Op. 11. Philadelphia O, Ormandy. (Also works by Borodin, Tchaikovsky, Vaughan Williams.)

CBS M 30573—*Adagio for Strings*, Op. 11. New York P, Bernstein. (Also works by other composers.)

Philips Festivo 6570 181—*Adagio for Strings,* Op. 11. I Musici. (Also works by Bartók, Britten, Respighi.)

Argo ZRG 845—*Adagio for Strings,* Op. 11. St. Martin's academy, Marriner. (Also works by Copland, Cowell, Creston.)

RCA LM 7032—*Adagio for Strings,* Op. 11. NBC SO, Toscanini. (Also works by other composers.)

RCA AGL 1-3790—*Adagio for Strings,* Op. 11. Boston SO, Munch. (Also works by Elgar, Tchaikovsky.)

CBS MS 6713—Violin Concerto, Op. 14. *Stern;* New York P, Bernstein. (Also Hindemith: Violin Concerto.)

Telarc DG 10043—*Commando* March. Cleveland Symphonic Winds, Fennell. (Also works by other composers.)

Everest 3282—Symphony No. 2, Op. 19; *Medea,* Op. 23: Suite. New SO of London, Barber.

Mercury SRI 75049—*Capricorn Concerto,* Op. 21. Eastman-Rochester SO,Hanson. (Also works by Ginastera, Sessions.)

Varèse Sarabande VCS 81057—Cello Concerto Op. 22 (with Garbousova). Musica Aeterna O, Waldman. (Also Britten: Serenade, Op. 31, with Bressler, Froelich.)

Decca Eclipse ECS 707—Cello Concerto, Op. 22. Nelsova; New SO of London, Barber. (Also Rawthorne: Piano Concerto No. 2, with other performers.)

CBS MS 6398—*Toccata festiva,* Op. 36. Biggs; Philadelphia O, Ormandy. (Also works by Poulenc, R. Strauss, with other performers.)

Louisville LS 745—*Die Natali,* Op. 37. Louisville O, Mester. (Also C. Adam: Cello Concerto, with Kates.)

CBS MS 6638—Piano Concerto, Op. 38 (with Browning). Cleveland O, Szell. (Also Schuman: *A Song of Orpheus,* with Rose.)

Turnabout QTVS 34683—Piano Concerto, Op. 38. Ruskin; MIT SO, Epstein. (Also Copland: Piano Concerto.)

New World NW 309—*Essay for Orchestra,* No. 3, Op. 47. New York P, Mehta. (Also Gorigliano: Clarinet Concerto, with Drucker.)

Dictated Music: A Follow-Up Report

by Shirley P. Emanuel

A series of articles on a proposed dictated music system was published in the January–February, March–April, May–June, July–August, and November–December, 1980 issues of the *Musical Mainstream,* and November–December, 1979, January –February, March–April, May–June, and November–December, 1980 issues of *Contemporary Sound Track.* In this article we will briefly review the characteristics of the method, discuss reader responses to the earlier articles and a sample tape subsequently distributed upon request, and look at future possibilities for utilizing the system.

The System

The significant characteristics of the method are: (1) symbols and relationships are systematically described according to two formulas, one for instrumental music (rhythmic value, letter name, other signs) and the other for vocal music (text, rhythmic value, letter name, other signs); (2) pitches are given using the braille system of octaves; and (3) melodic movement is described according to braille rules. The overall emphases of the method, which is designed to accommodate all types and complexities of music, are conciseness, systematization, and ease of understanding. Unlike other familiar kinds of dictated music in which the music is played or sung, the dictated music described here consists entirely of verbal descriptions of the music notation.

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Reader Response

Reader response to the five initial articles and the sample tape falls roughly into three subject areas: (1) encouragement to proceed as quickly as possible; (2) descriptions of personal methods for dictating music and other accounts of individual experiences; and (3) comments and suggestions relating to specific aspects of the proposed method. Altogether, about fifty individuals have responded, including one person from Finland.

Most comments are encouraging: "The dictated music idea is great," ". . .was very pleased with the concept of dictated music for vocal and instrumental music," "The system is lucid, logical, needed, and long overdue," and "This is something I have been waiting for for years." Several persons have asked to borrow tapes of dictated music, which, except for the sample keyboard tape, are not yet available.

These responses came from braille music readers, former print readers, and recorded courses readers, supporting our premise that all categories of music readers would be likely to find such a system useful. Also, most persons indicated that they would use the system or any future materials utilizing the system "in addition to" not "instead of" whatever they were using now, e.g., braille, recorded courses.

Information about several personal dictated music systems comprised of verbal descriptions of notation was received and reviewed with interest. These systems, in

general, were distinguished from the proposed NLS method mainly by their being designed for a particular type of music and/or level of difficulty, e.g., hymns, easy piano music. The library's object, different for obvious reasons, is to devise a single, concise method for describing all types of music in terms all music readers can understand. The fact that NLS has a different objective, however, does not reduce the validity and suitability of individual systems for the persons for whom they were designed.

Comments and suggestions tended to be voiced by more than one person. Several individuals, particularly those who had dictated more complex music, such as orchestral scores, indicated that they generally agreed with the prosposed method. Some persons voiced a definite preference for hearing the pitch rather than the rhythmic value first, even if succinctness had to be sacrificed. A few persons indicated concern about whether sighted persons could or should have to learn the braille system of octaves.

The Future

Substantial experimentation and development must now be undertaken in two crucial areas. The first of these is experimentation in describing more types and complexities of music. For example, the sample keyboard tape, consisting of easy and advanced piano music and intermediate organ music, yielded numerous specialized problems for both the person preparing the verbal description of the notation and for the persons "reading" or listening to the descriptions. The satisfactory resolution of these problems provided a number of new specialized "rules" for describing keyboard music. This experimentation must now be carried to vocal and single-line instrumental music, and perhaps further to choral, orchestral, and other areas. The cumulative effect of these experiences will be to ensure consistency, accuracy, and clarity in dictated music descriptions, regardless of the type and complexity of the music.

The second area for experimentation and development is in devising instructional materials enabling volunteers to use the new system and to prepare dictated music texts. While almost all of the work on the system to date has been completed by Music Section staff, thereby ensuring a certain level of consistency and continuity, NLS hopes to soon involve a larger group of people in the preparation of the verbal descriptions. To permit this development and to simultaneously ensure consistency, we will be preparing written guidelines within the next several months. These guidelines will cover many types and complexities of music and will pave the way for volunteers to eventually become involved in the preparation of dictated music tapes that NLS readers will be able to borrow.

Large-print copies of the initial five articles and of the sample keyboard cassette tape are available from:

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Selected Reprints

Critics Ain't What They Used to Be: The Sad Decline of Musical Invective

by Nicolas Slonimsky
Keyboard and Virtuoso Classics
January/February 1982

I am often asked why I do not bring up-to-date my "best-seller," entitled "Lexicon of Musical Invective" and subtitled "Critical Assaults on Composers Since Beethoven's Time." The answer is extremely simple and sad. Music critics have ceased using invective against their customary targets, composers of modern music. There is now no limit to what a composer can do in public without getting punished for his (and, increasingly, also her) dissonant crime. In fact, the critics became inexplicably tame shortly after the publication of my little booklet in 1953.

One American music critic who held the fort against the invasion of cacophony for many years before he quit in disgust, even accused me of corrupting young composers by providing them with a list of all those vituperative, pejorative, and imprecatory epithets directed against Beethoven, Brahms, Liszt, Wagner, and even the mellifluous Chopin and the sweet Tchaikovsky, which I collected in an index called the Invecticon. Now these youthful musical delinquents could flaunt them at the critics as a deterrent: See what they said about great composers, so watch your step lest your word land in the next edition of the Musical Invectives.

Well, I plead not guilty of intimidating music critics. How could I? In collecting all those lovely outbursts of critical wrath, I could not help admiring the critics for the sheer power of invective they hurled. The musical revolution that silenced such critics also deprived me of the delight of searching for and finding succulent material for a possible new edition of my book.

The only sample worthy of inclusion in my Invecticon which I succeeded in locating during the last quarter of a century was in a *New York Times* review in which the critic said that a certain ultramodern symphony "stinks." But this expression of opinion was long before preempted by the

---

Nicolas Slonimsky, according to the entry he wrote on himself for *Baker's Biographical Dictionary of Musicians,* has led a varied and amazing life: as rehearsal pianist at the Kiev Opera; musical journalist for the *Boston Evening Transcript* and the *Christian Science Monitor;* musical anecdotes columnist for *The Etude;* conductor of world premiere performances of music by Charles Ives, Edgar Varese, Henry Cowell, and others; lecturer in Slavonic languages and literature at Harvard University; and composer.

He is the editor of *Baker's Biographical Dictionary of Musicians;* the author of *Thesaurus of Scales and Melodic Patterns* and *Lexicon of Musical Invective;* and the writer of the earliest singing commercials, among which were *Make This a Day of Pepsodent, No More Shiny Nose,* and *Children Cry for Castoria.* ©1982 by *Keyboard and Virtuoso Classics.* All rights reserved. Used with permission.

ineffable Hanslick who used it to describe the last movement of Tchaikovsky's violin concerto. Poor Tchaikovsky was so chagrined by it that he carried the clipping in his pocket for several years, masochistically reading it in his frequent moments of depression.

No, music critics are not afraid of misjudging a future masterpiece. They have simply lost the capacity for moral indignation, and along with it, an inclination, and perhaps an ability, to write purple prose. And without purple prose it is impossible to denounce the malefactors of modernistic music. With what unrestrained joy I welcomed the colorful description of Debussy's *La Mer* (The Sea) at the hands of Louis Elson, a respectable writer and music historian, in the Boston *Daily Advertiser!* "It is possible that Debussy did not intend to call it *La Mer,* but *Le Mal de Mer* (Seasickness), which would at once make the tone-picture as clear as day. The first movement is Headache. The second is Doubt, whether or not. The third, with its explosions and rumblings, has now a self-evident purpose. The hero is endeavoring to throw up his boot heels!"

Fifty years ago I embarked on a suicidal conducting tour. I say suicidal because I stubbornly persisted in programming works by modern American composers at that time who were totally unacceptable to audiences and critics alike. These composers are now justly glorified: Ives, Ruggles, Cowell, Varèse. My conducting career came to an inglorious end in the vast expanses of the Hollywood Bowl where my concerts made audiences leave in droves. But I got wonderful material for my "Lexicon of Musical Invective" from reviews by American, French, and particularly German critics. My favorite is the one about a perfectly innocent piece by Wallingford Riegger, entitled *Dichotomy:* "It sounded as though a pack of rats were being slowly tortured to death, and meanwhile, from time to time, a dying cow groaned." What a striking surrealist tableau! What would Salvador Dali have done with it?

Scatological allusions were made in a Berlin review of *The Sun-Treader* by Carl Ruggles: "It should have been properly renamed *Latrine-Treader.* The title comes nearer to the music. I had an impression of bowel constrictions in an atonal Tristan ecstasy."

Naturally, comparisons with animal cries abound in reviews of modern music. My Invecticon lists epithets such as Baboon, Frog, Gnat, Hyena, Maggot, Mosquito, Pig, Rat, Snake, Wild Boar, and Woodpecker to describe the music or at times composers themselves. Among animals the cat is represented in numerous contexts. A London newspaper complained that Liszt's orchestration sounds like "the forlorn wail of an amorous cat at midnight." That Katzenjammer was chosen as an adequate description of Wagner's chromatic passages is understandable; but the charge that the *Second Symphony* of Brahms can produce an uncomfortable headache similar to that caused by Katzenjammer, made in the most learned American music publication of the time, *Dwight's Journal of Music,* is difficult to assess.

Music critics of old were masters of outrageous summaries. An anonymous

writer in the London *Dramatic and Musical Review* stated unambiguously, upon hearing the *Symphonie Fantastique:* "Berlioz, musically speaking, is a lunatic; a classical composer only in Paris, the great city of quacks." A critic in *The Musical World* of London dismissed Chopin's music after hearing his recital in 1841, as "ranting hyperbole and excruciating cacophony." He found an excuse for "Chopin's delinquencies" in that he was "entrammeled in the enthralling bonds of that arch-enchantress, George Sand," but expressed his astonishment that she "can be content to wanton away her dreamlike existence with an artistic nonentity like Chopin."

Beautiful! But Chopin's London manager did not appreciate this type of review for his client. Those were bucolic times when simplicity reigned in public relations. The manager sought out the critic and offered him a substantial sum of money to change his opinion about Chopin. The critic (it was in all probability the formidable Henry Fothergill Chorley) agreed; his subsequent reviews of Chopin's recitals were quite nice. In his Paris years, the great German poet Heinrich Heine, who wrote on music as well as on other arts, openly solicited money from Meyerbeer in exchange for laudatory articles on his operas.

Alas, the critics of today are as incorruptible as Robespierre. Even if modern composers were not paupers they could never bribe a music critic even in a hick town. They probably would not even try because good write-ups would cast suspicion on their nonconformity to the common standard.

What is most lacking in contemporary music criticism is the quality of moral indignation. This lack is particularly noticeable in reviews of operas. The London *Spectator,* commenting on the success of *La Traviata,* lamented: "We should have thought the production of *La Traviata* an outrage on the ladies of the aristocracy who support the theater, if they had not, by crowding their boxes every night, shown that they did not notice the underlying vice of the opera."

Half a century later, W. J. Henderson, a respectable writer, voiced his horror at the morals of modern opera in his account of Richard Strauss's *Salomé.* "If this be art," he concluded his article in the New York *Sun,* "then let the music of the future find her mission in sewer, pesthouse and brothel."

Then came *Wozzeck.* "As I left the State Opera last night I had a sensation not of coming out of a public institution," wrote the critic of *Deutsche Zeitung,* "but out of an insane asylum. . . . I regard the perpetrator of *Wozzeck,* Alban Berg, as a musical swindler and a musician dangerous to the community. We must seriously pose the question as to what extent the musical profession can be criminal. We deal here, in the realm of music, with a capital offense."

Let me end my observations by quoting a review of the world premiere of Tchaikovsky's famous piano concerto in B flat, which was given (you will never guess!) in Boston, Massachusetts! The highly regarded *Dwight's Journal of Music* reads: "This extremely difficult, strange, wild, ultramodern Russian concerto is the composition of Peter Tchaikovsky, a young

professor at the Conservatory of Moscow. . . . We had the wild Cossack fire and impetus without stint, but could we ever learn to love such music?'' Now, all together, in unison, let us sing ''Tonight We Love,'' which was a top tune in America in the 1940s. The melody was from that concerto by Peter Tchaikovsky!

Well, they were wrong, wildly wrong, those critics of a hundred years ago, but they bared their souls without fear of rebuttal. And they showed a great talent for rhetoric.

A Plaine and Easie Introduction to the Ayres of John Dowland

by Lorraine Gorrell
NATS Journal
November–December 1981

"There is not any Musicke of Instruments whatsoever comparable to that which is made of the voyces of men . . ." (Byrd 1588)

John Dowland (1563–1626)—composer, singer, and lutenist—has provided the modern singer with a wealth of unsurpassed vocal literature. One of the finest musical representatives of the Elizabethan Age, he infused song (the ayre) with a uniqueness and charm that has appealed to singers for nearly 400 years. Living in a period that is considered a golden age in English vocal music, an age of singers and singing, Dowland lifted the ayre to its greatest heights.

Dowland's ayres for voice and lute present the singer with a rich palette of harmonic, melodic, and textual colors. There is, in fact, great variety in texts, mood, and character throughout all five of Dowland's collections: *The First Booke of Songs or Ayres* (1597); *The Second Booke of Songs* (1600); *The Third and Last Booke of Songs* (1603); *A Pilgrimes Solace* (1612); three songs in Robert Dowland's (John Dowland's son) collection *A Musicall Banquet* (1610). Such diversity provides the potential for numerous groupings of songs which will enhance any part of a recital. Audiences will appreciate these songs simply because they are in English—and what delightful English texts Dowland has chosen! Some of the most vigorous poetry of the English Renaissance appears in these songs, poems devoted to Nature, Time, God and Love—somehow all subjects lead back to the eternal problems of love. The lover generally finds his mistress unfaithful, cold, inconstant—"with eyes of fire and heart of flint" ("Come again! Sweet love doth now invite," Bk. 1). This poetry is rich in the most elegant as well as the most earthy imagery, striking contrasts, gentleness, and bawdiness. It demands the singer's clearest, cleanest diction, for an audience should not miss the rich detail of language or its meaning. The sheer density of ideas per line and subtlety of meaning will require all of the audience's energy and attention and all the singer's skill. Notice, for example, the complexity of images in stanza two of "The lowest trees" (Bk. 3):

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Where waters smoothest run, deep are the fords,
The dial stirs, yet none perceives it move;
The firmest faith is in the fewest words,
The turtles cannot sing, and yet they love,
True hearts have eyes and ears, no tongues to speak:
They hear, and see, and sigh, and then they break.

Dowland usually chose to set poetry syllabically (one note per syllable of text). This means that his songs generally convey more ideas and words to the audience than would occur in a typical Handel aria; the text must, therefore, be articulated rapidly and precisely. If the first group of songs in a recital includes Dowland ayres, the singer would be wise to use vigorous articulation exercises in the warm-up (a good practice in any case).

Most of the poems Dowland used are strophic and are set to music in corresponding stanzas. Only the first stanza of text is printed with the music, while the remaining stanzas appear at the end of the song in verse form; often a second stanza will have extra syllables of text which must be fitted into the same number of notes that were written for the first stanza; or text accents may fall on different note values than those of stanza one. At this point the performer is free to arrive at his own solutions, as long as the solution makes musical sense and does not disturb the natural accents of the poetry. In "Come again! Sweet love doth now invite," for example, stanza six is two syllables shorter than stanza one. This problem can be solved in a variety of ways.

In some poems, such as "Far from triumphing court" *(Musicall Banquet)*, however, remaining stanzas are not so easily adjusted to the music of the first stanza. Edward Doughtie (1963), in his *Poems from the Songbooks of John Dowland*, suggests that perhaps remaining stanzas would not be sung at all but are included at the end of the song for the sake of the poetry and are to be read. Because this musicological problem has no definitive solution, the decision rests with the singer in performance. He can either "force" the text underlay, read the stanza aloud, or simply include it in the program notes.

Word play in Elizabethan poetry may be visual as well as aural, an extra dimension of pleasure for the audience if the poetry is printed in the program notes. "It was a time when silly bees" (Bk. 3), for example, plays on the homonyms "*time*" and "*thyme*."

It was a time when silly bees could speak,
And in that *time* I was a silly bee,
Who fed on *thyme* until my heart 'gan break
Yet never found the *time* would favour me.
Of all the swarm I only did not thrive,
Yet brought I wax and honey to the hive . . .

Many of Dowland's songs are quite lengthy when all stanzas are sung, and the performer may choose to omit those stanzas which do not maintain the continuity of poetic thought. In "Come again!," for example, three stanzas (1,2,6) can be sung without destroying the sense of the song. Even with the omission of the other three stanzas the song is still at least three min-

utes long, sung at a brisk tempo. Composers themselves sometimes selected only a few stanzas from long poems for their songs. This is true of Dowland's "If that a sinner's sighes" *(A Pilgrimes Solace)* which appears in William Byrd's *Psalmes, Sonets and Songs* (1588) with additional stanzas.

"Come again!" is lengthy, not only because of its six stanzas of text but also because of its ABB form. The repeated B sections become quite burdensome to the performer who elects to sing all six stanzas with six repeats. Obviously one must exercise great creativity in varying inflection and nuance in each repeated B, but it is also appropriate to ornament the repeat, the usual practice with lute solos using this form. "The singer who does not sing the piece as it is written, but also embellishes it, transforms, by means of the ornamentation . . . a tasteless dish into a salted and seasoned viand. . . ." (Pincherle [1958], quoting from the 1522 treatise of Adrian Petit-Coclicus). Thurston Dart in *The Interpretation of Music* (1963) states that

> No sixteenth-century English treatises on improvised divisions [ornaments] survive, and it is fairly clear that divisions were used, even if to a much lesser extent than they were on the Continent. A few remarks in Morley (1597) suggest that some choirmen were in the habit of adding extempore runs and cadences to the music in front of them, and many of the variant readings recorded in the ten volumes of *Tudor Church Music* seem to have originated in this way.

An examination of early instruction books such as Ganassi's *Fontegara* (1535) will provide some suggestions on possible vocal embellishments. (Although this is a recorder treatise, it provides many examples of how to embellish a melodic line.) The most practical place to seek appropriate ornaments is in Dowland's lute solos, particularly those that also exist as songs such as the famous pavan, "Lachrimae." "Lachrimae" or "Flow my tears" (Bk. 2) is structured AABBCC with new text used for the musical repetitions of sections A and B.

Nearly half of Dowland's songs are patterned ABB, another ten percent are structured AAB, and seven percent more are AABB. Obviously repetition is fundamental to Dowland's style. Repeats cannot be omitted in performance without violating the formal structure of the song and preventing a "re-reading" of those portions of text which the composer chose to emphasize.

The performer who has just discovered Dowland will find his music challenging and unique in its blending of modalism and tonality and in its somewhat complicated rhythmic and metrical features. Bar lines were used in lute songs primarily as a means of keeping lute and voice parts together and did not imply the accentual quality (strong and weak beats) that they have today. In fact, vocal lines were printed in partbooks without bar lines (Fellowes 1920). It is necessary to allow the textual accents to dominate (Warlock 1926), unless the song is structured around the accents of a particular dance form of the period. Sometimes even the first stanzas of poems will seem awkwardly set if

they have been fitted into a dance form or if the lute solo existed before the lute song (see Poulton 1951). Rhythmic groupings of two's and three's should not be treated as if they were syncopated. "Shall I sue?" (Bk. 2) is a prime example of mixed rhythms.

Despite a revival of interest in lute playing, there are still few lutenists available to the modern singer. The harpsichord or guitar can be excellent substitutes since each is non-sustaining and plucked with relatively moderate ranges of dynamics. Substitution of instruments was common even in Dowland's day, as Dowland himself indicated in the titles to his song books. The title of his third book, for example, is *The Third and Last Booke of Songs or Aires. Newly composed to sing to the Lute, Orpharion, or viols. . . .* Dowland also provided alternative versions for many of his ayres in the form of part songs for four voices (See Musica Britannica, Vol. 6, 1955). John Ward in "A Dowland Miscellany" (Ward 1977) states: ". . . their title pages invite the performer(s) to make use of them in a variety of ways, and the manuscript sources prove that the invitation was accepted."

In general, a group of Dowland's songs will work well anywhere in a recital. Many of the spritely, tuneful songs found in Books 1, 2, and 3 are particularly attractive as an opening group, while the highly dissonant introspective songs of Dowland's later years *(A Musicall Banquet* and *A Pilgrimes Solace)* would be more effective late in a program, perhaps even as the final group. What, for example, can follow "In darkness let me dwell" *(A Musicall Banquet)?*

In darkness let me dwell, the ground shall sorrow be,
The roof despair to bar all cheerful light from me,
The walls of marble black that moisten'd still shall weep,
Thus wedded to my woes, and bedded to my tomb,
O, let me, living, living, die, till death do come.
In darkness let me dwell.

Most Dowland ayres are modest in vocal range, usually no more than an octave which may fall anywhere between D_3 and G_4. For singers who like to begin in a comfortable part of the voice, these songs are ideal "openers." The limited vocal range also lends itself to beginning voice students, who will not be over-taxed by songs like "When Phoebus first did Daphne love" (Bk. 3), "Say love if ever thou didst find" (Bk. 3), "Away with these self-loving lads" (Bk. 1), and "The lowest trees have tops" (Bk. 3). Some of the songs, however, are musically difficult and contain unfamiliar metrical and rhythmic relationships; the voice teacher must exercise great care in the choice of songs. "In darkness let me dwell," for example, will only frustrate the young singer because of its long phrases, complex rhythms, and morose text, and should be reserved for the mature singer who would be excited by these challenges.

The lute song, like the nineteenth-century *Lied,* was composed for a setting of friends and patrons in private social

gatherings. In such an intimate setting, the text of the song was of primary importance because words could be understood (even when delivered by an amateur performer). The delicate combination of lute and voice was also ideal because it required no great projective powers from either instrument. When these songs are transferred to the modern recital hall, their intimacy must not be lost. The performers have a responsibility to convey the delightful character and spirit of John Dowland's lovely ayres.

Practical Editions

Songs from Books 1 through *A Musicall Banquet* found in: *The English Lute-Song Series I*, Stainer & Bell. American Agents, Galaxy Music Corporation, New York. These are accurate transcriptions of the lute tablature into keyboard notation. The tablature is also included. All of Dowland's published ayres are included in the following:

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Songs of John Dowland in the NLS Braille Music Collection

These songs were originally written for voice and lute (in tablature); the lute part has been arranged for piano. All the songs were originally included in Dowland's collection *Songs or Airs*, books 1–3.

Deare If You Change BRM 24205
For medium voice and piano
Boosey & Hawkes RNIB

Fine Knacks for Ladies (Peddler's Song) BRM 24203
For medium voice and piano
Boosey & Hawkes RNIB

_____ **BRM 5898**
For tenor and piano
Boosey & Co. SBP

Flow Not So Fast Yee Fountaines BRM 1999
For medium voice and piano
Boosey & Hawkes RNIB

A Shepherd in a Shade BRM 23785
For medium voice and piano

Reprints John Dowland

Boosey & Hawkes RNIB
Weepe You No More Sad Fountaines
BRM 24204
For high voice and piano
Stainer & Bell RNIB

Sir Georg Solti, Chicago's Many-Sided Maestro Returns to *The Ring*

by Phillip Huscher
Ovation
February, 1982

The musical life of Sir Georg Solti has been an exceptional one. At 35, an age when many conductors have already made their mark, Solti was best known as a pianist, having conducted in public hardly at all. Today, as he nears his 70th birthday later this year, Solti is in peak form as one of the major conductors of the post-war era, anticipating one of the biggest projects of his career—a *Ring* at Bayreuth in 1983—and still at the height of his acclaim as Music Director of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.

Solti and the CSO are now winding up an eight-city tour of the western United States, their first in eight years, giving concerts in St. Louis, San Francisco and Los Angeles (where they have never before appeared together). Tour highlights include the recently-recorded Bruckner Fourth and Bartok *Concerto for Orchestra*. This comes on the heels of a fourth European tour, by all accounts triumphant, and in Solti's view, decisive. When I talked with him in November, as he was beginning his thirteenth season as Music Director in Chicago, he was still touched by memories of the month-long trip. "It was the best tour we ever had," he said like the proud father—a role he often adopts with the orchestra as well as with his two daughters. "And not only in artistic terms, which I heartily expected. But what I didn't expect was the warmth of the reception, the tremendous enthusiasm of the public and the press. It was well above my dreams."

Three previous European tours had, of course, proved wildly successful, and helped establish the Solti-CSO partnership as one of the most exciting forces in music today. But Solti had been worried about this trip, because the 1978 tour had set up almost impossible expectations. Last year he admitted that the 1981 trip would be the most difficult yet. "I am happy to report," he said on returning, "that we did live up to the expectations."

Solti was particularly proud of the reception in Salzburg, where Peter Crosse, Salzburg's most influential critic, called the CSO appearance the "absolute highlight" of the festival, which, of course, also included concerts by the Berlin and Vienna Philharmonic Orchestras. "On the last tour," Solti recalled, "certain Austrian and German papers said, 'Yes, it's very good, but it's not the Vienna Philharmonic,' or 'not the Berlin Philharmonic.' This time either they said we are as good—or better!

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This pleased me tremendously. Of course, we have developed greatly in the last three or four years, and we are melding together more than ever before. It's very natural: the more we play together, the better we get. I have passed roughly my 550th concert with them—this is a great deal of musical experience together."

Before the tour last summer—a time of year Solti spends away from the concert hall, studying scores in the sea air of his Italian home, Roccamare—Solti spent two weeks in London, recording Mozart's *Nozze di Figaro,* the opera he has conducted more often than any other. The cast was, to a large extent, based on Solti's Paris production, first unveiled in 1973 to inaugurate the regime of Rolf Liebermann as director of the Paris Opera, and later brought to this country as part of France's Bicentennial tribute. In 1980, Solti returned to the Paris *Figaro* as a farewell gesture to Liebermann, and then last June he was reunited with Kiri Te Kanawa (the Countess), Lucia Popp (Susanna), Frederica von Stade (Cherubino), and joined by newcomers Samuel Ramey (Figaro) and Thomas Allen (the Count) in the recording studio.

"It is really the best possible cast that you can have," Solti said, happily, "and they behaved like a dream. It was a wonderful experience." *Figaro* comes last among Solti's major Mozart opera recordings, following *Die Zauberfloete* (1969), *Cosi fan tutte* (1973), and *Don Giovanni* (1978). "It was simply a coincidence," Solti insisted, "but quite honestly I am happy that I waited so long. It was better this way. Now I have a lifelong experience with this opera."

Figaro was the first opera Solti ever conducted in public. After spending eight years as a coach at the Budapest Opera, and summers under the spell of Toscanini at Salzburg, the 25-year-old Solti was asked to step in and conduct, without rehearsal, the Opera's *Figaro,* on March 11, 1938. As it happened, that date was to be marked in history by Hitler's invasion of Vienna, some 130 miles away, and for all Hungarians it was a night shattered by the threat of war.

The news spread throughout the opera house during intermission. "They didn't tell me, fortunately," Solti remembers, but as the performance continued he knew something was wrong. "In the third act, Figaro started making so many mistakes, and then the Count, who was a Jewish singer, was all over the place. I just didn't understand what the hell was going on!"

When Solti was told, after the final curtain, he was devastated. "This is the most dramatic—melodramatic—memory that a musician can have. I had never been so excited in my life. This was a dream: to conduct for the first time in an opera house. But when you have waited for an occasion for so long, and then on the same night such a tragic thing happens, you think you will probably never conduct again." Thinking back over the years, Solti doubts that he seriously believed that at the time; but, as he admits, "it was very much in the cards." In fact, it was another six years before he had the chance to conduct again. "I always believed that at some point I would make it. But now it all sounds too easy, and too romantic. It wasn't easy—it was really life and death."

With the onslaught of war, Solti fled to Switzerland; within days he received a telegram from his mother warning him not to return to Budapest. (He did not go back to the city of his birth until 1968, for the funeral of his sister, and then, under official banner, for a series of concerts with the Vienna Philharmonic in 1978.)

In Switzerland, Solti made his living coaching singers, and turned his energies to the piano, winning the Geneva Concours International in 1942. But he had wanted to be a conductor since childhood. "At first it was tremendously frustrating," he remembers, "although later I enjoyed playing the piano very much. Yet I always knew—always—that at the first opportunity I would leave it. I never said, 'Alright now, I've played so much piano, why don't I stick to it?' And there were many serious temptations later on. Joseph Szigeti came to Switzerland, looking for an accompanist. At that point he was at the top of his career. So, one afternoon we made music together, and he said he wanted to take me to America. Fortunately I didn't go. It would have been a tremendous detour in my conducting life, or probably finished it—forever. You never know."

By then, the war was nearly over, and Solti's conducting career about to begin. In 1946, Solti was invited to come to the Munich State Opera as Music Director. He stayed there six years, catching up on the opera repertory. ("It was not for several years that Munich began to discover that I was conducting everything for the first time," he once said.) Then, he accepted a position with the Frankfurt Opera, where he remained for a decade.

During these years, Solti began the seven-year project that would make his name, the first complete recording of Wagner's *Ring* cycle. It was also during his Frankfurt days that Solti made his American debut, conducting *Elektra* at the San Francisco Opera in September 1953. Ironically, his debut here was supposed to have taken place with the Chicago Symphony at Ravinia a few months earlier, but Solti's request for a visa was temporarily rejected, and he was forced to cancel. He did come to Ravinia the following summer, and then back to Chicago for two seasons at Lyric Opera in 1956 and 1957, but he did not conduct the Symphony downtown in Orchestra Hall until 1965.

By then, Solti was Music Director of the Royal Opera House at Covent Garden, a post he took over in 1961 and held for a decade. During those years, the conductor actually turned down an offer to become Music Director of the Chicago Symphony, something Chicagoans today tend to forget, but Solti remembers vividly: "At the time when I was first approached, I was already engaged at Covent Garden and had no intention of giving it up. They were looking for someone along the lines of Dr. Reiner, someone who would conduct twenty or twenty-four weeks a year, and I said I couldn't do it. The president of the orchestra at that time said my rejection was an insult. So, I thought that's the end of that—forever. You see, I have an interesting, fateful relationship with this orchestra."

Solti wasn't in America again for some time, and dismissed the whole incident. Then, he returned to Chicago to guest con-

duct for two weeks, and was swept off his feet. "I liked it tremendously," Solti recalls. "It was wonderful. So when I was finished I went back to my manager in New York and I said 'I'm not really interested in guest conducting very much, but if you can get me three or four weeks every year in Chicago—that I would love to do.' A year later, John Edwards [CSO general manager] came to Europe to talk to me, and that was the fateful point when he asked if I would be interested in becoming Music Director."

"I knew already that I was leaving Covent Garden, because when I had signed my contract in 1966, I said 'This is the last one—look for my successor.' It was quite clear to me that I needed a change. Up to that point I was an operatic conductor foremost and a symphony conductor as a 'side profession.' I wanted to reverse that, to do the other side of the coin."

For a while Solti did turn his attention to the symphony. His success with the new job in Chicago was immediate, and within months the Solti-CSO "marriage"—as Solti was fond of calling it—was making headlines, selling records, winning awards, and taking audiences by storm; it became one of the more interesting chapters in the musical history of the 1970s. In 1970, Solti also took a post with L'Orchestre de Paris, and more recently became Music Director of the London Philharmonic (which he turns over to Klaus Tennstedt next year).

But Solti was ambivalent about his switch to the concert hall, and two years after his departure from Covent Garden, he became Musical Advisor to the Paris Opera, and began to return periodically to the London opera house as well. Solti is, by his own admission, a man unable to choose between opera and symphony, and a musician who has enjoyed major successes in both fields. That quality, he fears, is becoming rarer in conductors today.

"You have to come from opera into symphony—not the reverse—and nowadays, young conductors are not growing up in the opera houses." Thinking of his early training in Budapest, he continued, "The experience of an opera coach is tremendously valuable, because what you learn working with singers—essential things like phrasing, breathing, flexibility—you cannot do without. You can't just go into the pit and conduct. An operatic conductor needs much more experience than a symphony conductor; you learn that quickly, but an operatic experience takes years. Ideally, one should start conducting by 18 or 20, and when you are 35 or 40, you have conducted all the repertory, and then you begin to develop. But when you start as an opera conductor at 34, as I did, you have practically missed the boat. Finally I picked up all the missing bits in my musical life, and I made it. But it took an enormous amount of time, diligence, and energy. It is not just a question of talent, it is a question of experience."

"You know," Solti said, thinking of his own struggle, "I owe a great deal to Erich Kleiber, who was a wonderful musician, and a particularly wonderful opera conductor. He taught me a great many things—that an opera conductor is different from any other conductor, because you need not only ears, but eyes—it's a two-

dimensional way of life. If you have no eye for the stage, you will never be a good opera conductor. Either you should be able to do production yourself, or work very actively with the producer, which I always do."

At the moment, Solti is working with director Sir Peter Hall and designer William Dudley on the biggest operatic project of his career, the new Bayreuth *Ring* cycle to be staged in 1983, honoring the centenary of Wagner's death. Ironically, the most famous *Ring* conductor of our day has never before appeared at Bayreuth, but Solti shrugs this off as another twist of fate: "I have been so long connected with Wagner—it's like if you are a Catholic priest, you must end up as the Pope."

Solti's association with the *Ring* goes back to the late 1950s and the Decca/London recordings. The company's first choice to conduct was Hans Knappertsbusch, who—unlike Solti at the time—was a time-honored Wagnerian, and had, at least, conducted the cycle in the opera house. But, at the urging of John Culshaw, Solti was given the job; the recording began with *Das Rheingold* in 1958, and was completed some seven years later. The set made history, and sold beyond anyone's wildest dreams. Solti's conducting, however, came in for harsh words from some critics, and to this day, the strengths and weaknesses of his work on these records haunt the conductor's reputation. Solti admits that he was "too young as a Wagner conductor" then; in fact, he had never even conducted live performances of *Siegfried* or *Gotterdaemmerung* before the records were made.

Solti has long sought to return to the *Ring* under ideal conditions. His first complete cycle in the opera house came just as he was finishing the recording, during the 1964–65 season at Covent Garden. More recently, during his affiliation with the Paris Opera, he began another cycle. Solti was, reportedly, unhappy with the Paris *Ring* from the start, and he bowed out after conducting *Das Rheingold* and *Die Walkuere* in 1976. "It is the first unfinished *Ring* in the history of mankind," he said angrily at the time, and later, simply that it was "a fiasco." There were rumors of a Solti *Ring* at the Met in 1980, and, in the meantime, tantalizing snatches of the operas in concert with the Chicago Symphony—performances that suggested that Solti had, indeed, matured greatly as a Wagnerian. But still, no complete *Ring*.

Then, at a press conference in Chicago last January, Solti announced that he had agreed to conduct the 1983 cycle at Bayreuth, and return the following two summers to repeat it; if all went as planned, Decca/London would record the Bayreuth *Ring*. To coincide with the 1983 festivities, Solti is also slated to conduct the soundtrack for an eight-part BBC series on the life of Wagner, with Richard Burton as the composer and Vanessa Redgrave as Cosima.

Despite the magnitude of the *Ring* project, Solti has other operas on his mind. In 1984, he will return to Covent Garden to celebrate the 25th anniversary of his debut there, conducting *Der Rosenkavalier*. For his next Mozart recording, Solti wants to do *Abduction from the Seraglio*, and hopes to re-record *Die Zauberfloete*—"I would

like to do it again, differently, just simply differently." Last year, Solti went to see *Amadeus,* the hit play directed by his Bayreuth collaborator Peter Hall. "I didn't dare to go for a long time," Solti confessed, "because I was afraid it would ruin my Mozart memories. And then I met the author, Peter Shaffer, privately, and he talked so enchantingly about Mozart, and told me so many interesting things about Salieri which I didn't know. So I went—and I liked it immensely. I saw Scofield, who was absolutely wonderful."

Aside from his work in opera, Solti's major commitment is still to the Chicago Symphony. For some time, many speculated that he would sever his single American connection when his Chicago contract expired in 1981, but last year Solti signed on as Music Director through the end of the 1984–85 season, and repeated his great hope to stay with the orchestra until its centenary in 1991. With the Chicagoans, Solti has many plans, particularly for recordings: he is eager to finish their Bruckner symphony cycle, and is talking seriously about re-recording the Beethoven symphonies—perhaps a sort of "final testament' of the Solti-CSO alliance.

Last year, Teldec, which distributes Decca in Germany, released a 75-lb., 203-record set called *Edition Solti,* a collection of all the recordings he has made in his association with the company, from a previously-unreleased *Egmont* Overture (with the Tonhalle Orchestra in 1947) to the Mahler *Resurrection* Symphony, taped in Chicago in 1980. Solti is as delighted by the gesture as he is daunted by the thought of listening to the entire set. "I'll never do it," he said, appalled at the prospect. Solti has always liked making records more than listening to them.

In November, Solti recorded Haydn's *Creation* in Orchestra Hall, the site of many splendid CSO recording sessions under Reiner and others until the hall was renovated with disappointing results in 1966, and record companies moved out. In 1977, Deutsche Grammophon took the plunge and returned to the hall; Decca/London followed last year for Solti's Bartok and Bruckner discs. This past summer, the hall underwent a $3.4 million renovation, which sought, among other things, to improve acoustics. By most accounts, including Solti's own "preliminary" judgment, this a success; he now hopes to record there always.

Also with the Chicago Symphony, Solti wants to redo the Mahler symphonies that he recorded earlier with different orchestras. The *Resurrection* was the first in this series, and the Ninth will follow this spring. Solti and the Symphony played the Ninth throughout Europe in the fall, and, in Solti's opinion, "it was the highlight of the tour. Amsterdam was the most moving experience. In a way, something happened which had never happened to me before. We were in the Concertgebouw, which is already a moving occasion, because this is the hall which discovered Mahler and gave him his first great success. When we finished the piece, there was a moment of absolute silence—which happens very seldom—and no one broke the silence. Then they rose to their feet in unison and began to cheer. It was unbelievable."

Although Solti now sits comfortably at the summit of his profession, he has never lost sight of his life-long struggle to get there. "If you are born with a talent, that's fate. But talent alone is just half of the procedure. The other half is your industriousness, your endurance, your belief in yourself, your tremendous physical and mental strength. If one component is missing, you can't make it."

Thinking back on his own career, and contemplating the years ahead, Solti admitted that his own ambitions and energies are as strong as ever. "I'll always be striving, always," he said. "Look, I will never be a satisfied musician—it's not my way of life. I always try to criticize myself more severely, to improve my performances. I never satisfy that. This is my blessing and my curse at the same time."

"RadioVisions"—NPR's Exploration of the World of Sound

by Joan La Barbara
Musical America
December 1981

An Adventurous New Series Opens Broadcasting Vistas

RadioVisions, an adventurous concept in presenting new music and audio art to the listening audience, premiered this October on the National Public Network, and continues throughout the season. Jointly funded through public and private sources, this fourteen-part series offers a wide view of what is currently happening in the world of sound, in addition to giving some historical perspective. Each hour-long program covers a different theme and was produced as an individual entity within the overall series. Gunther Schuller serves as the general host, but each program has its own commentator, enabling different views to be presented.

"Henry Cowell: The Gentle Pioneer" opens the series. It presents biographical details along with musical examples in a documentary format which overlays sonic illustrations throughout the information given in interviews with Cowell, his wife, and notables acquainted with Cowell's life and work. While serving as the model and inspiration for the *RadioVisions* series, it is more didactic in style and content than most of the programs.

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Oral History

"The Elder Statesmen" presents portraits of five octogenarian American composers: Ernst Bacon, Leo Orenstein, Dane Rudhyar, Nicholas Slonimsky, and Virgil Thomson. Each man comments anecdotally on his work and on the development of a new American music. The individual views combine to make a significant contribution to the oral history of twentieth-century culture in America.

In "Keyboard Innovations" we hear from instrument builders as well as from composers who did much to "re-invent" the piano. Conlon Nancarrow, an American who has spent the years since the Spanish Civil War living in exile in Mexico, speaks about his revolutionary work with player pianos. 1750 Arch Records has a fascinating collection of his player piano pieces available for those whose appetites are whetted by the musical examples offered on the program. Lou Harrison discusses various experiments he made with the piano, removing certain strings and placing tacks in the instrument to achieve different tone colors. John Cage comments on philosophical issues in his special, gently magnetic manner. His particular innovations in prepared piano completely transformed the way we think about the keyboard instrument. David Rosenboom, a pianist and audio research scientist, helped develop a new electronic keyboard instrument, the Touché, with electronics wizard Don Buchla. The Touché combines various aspects of synthesizers and computers into an ultimate real-time keyboard performance instrument.

An eight-track audio collage, created

from various realizations of a single melodic theme along with commentary from ten professional musicians from different backgrounds, forms the basis for Peter Gordon's "Shoptalk." John Giorno and Laurie Anderson are represented by language and rhythmic soundworks in the program called "Details at Eleven."

"The Oldest Instrument" is a wide-ranging study of uses of the voice from Tibetan monks, Balinese monkey chant, and other ethnic marvels, through Charles Ives and on into experimental or "extended" vocal techniques as used in contemporary music and soundart.

Four composer-conductors, Leonard Bernstein, Aaron Copland, Lukas Foss, and Gunther Schuller, discuss the creative interaction between these related but highly different professions in "The Composer as Conductor."

Directions Taken

"Music in Reaction: The New Consonance" traces the direction taken by a significant number of composers, reacting against the twelve-tone school of Schoenberg and Webern. Comments by Steve Reich, Harold Budd, and Brian Eno illustrate personal tendencies, and their works (as well as music of a dozen others) delineate a particular trend, especially notable in the 1960s and 1970s.

In "Notes from the Steel City" Daniel Lentz, William Thomas McKinley, and David Stock, all natives of Pittsburgh, show how, from similar backgrounds and shared mentors, each has produced a very different musical result. "Symmetries" intersperses twenty-four short pieces for eight violas with observations on the subject of symmetry collected from an architect, a shoe salesman, a nuclear physicist, and others.

John Cage's *Roaratorio: An Irish Circus on Finnegan's Wake,* produced originally through Westdeutscher Rundfunk in Cologne, is given its American premiere. Combining spoken texts, Irish ethnic songs, acoustic environments, and musical vignettes, it presents a sonic homage to Joyce in polyphonic oratorio form.

Cincinnati composers, artists, poets, and novelists suggest the variety of activities in this midwestern context, produced in collage form, called "High-Tech Etude." Winding up the series is an overview and discussion of the programs presented in *RadioVisions* and how they reflect the larger scope of twentieth-century music. In "Where Do We Go From Here?" Gunther Schuller proposes possible directions for music of the future and tenders his personal perspective.

In all, the series is broad-based and eclectic in style, approach, and format. Personality studies are mixed with musical examples. Composers are represented in various guises, as conductors, as inventors, as poets, as performers, as philosophers, as innovators, as humans working on a very real task.

A Healthy New Look

RadioVisions is a good beginning, a healthy new look at what is and has been going on within our century. It does not rely on old formats, but chooses various means to intrigue and inspire the listener. It is a vision of the vast, heretofore untapped

potential of radio as an experimental medium for the communication of new ideas as well as of information. As such, the series sets an important precedent for future creative use of the airwaves. Let us hope it is the start of a new wave of inspired radio productions in America and not just a glorious idea for a single season. Check with the local NPR affiliate in your area for exact times and dates of broadcasts. If you don't know the station in your area in the NPR network or if you'd like information about the educational cassette series to be developed from *RadioVisions* for library and school use, contact National Public Radio, 2025 M Street NW, Washington, DC 20036.

Happy Birthday, Dear Igor

by Ned Rorem
Opera News
January 2, 1982

At age twelve I heard *Le Sacre du Printemps* and became sick—sick from the thrill of an instantaneous, permanent shift in metabolism. So this was music! A door had opened, the sun flowed in with its nourishing and mysterious gold. The occasion was a nationwide broadcast of the New York Philharmonic, Stravinsky conducting, which I caught in Chicago and which, I later learned, was heard by every other twelve-yea -old composer in America, with the same traumatic effect.

Before that broadcast, though I surely counted on a musical career, I loved live fauna, birds in particular, which I collected and bred and knew all about. After the broadcast, I carted four wicker cages filled with rare finches to Vaughn's Seed Store in the Loop, traded them for a few dollars, crossed the street to Lyon & Healy's, bought score and discs of *Le Sacre du Printemps,* my rite of passage into adolescence—and during the next four decades never thought of animals again.

A few summers ago, an interest in nonhuman creatures revived, along with some metabolic reshifting, when a Russian Blue cat named Wallace entered my life. The passion for music, if not the need, subsided into another rite of passage that encouraged the rights of animals and the demystification of things artistic. That this recurrence should fall on the eve of Stravinsky's hundredth birthday lends impetus to a backward glance at our greatest composer. But before I let fly with opinions, let me state where I stand.

Yes, he was our greatest composer and his *Sacre* in turn is so solid as to be the absolute against which all other current art is judged—even movies, if you recall Pauline Kael's once touching and quickly outmoded bid to validate *Last Tango in Paris*. Indeed *Le Sacre* is a fact of life we take for granted, like Beethoven's Fifth, and seldom listen to any more. Conditioned to a masterpiece, we digest it without question and forget. Instinctively composers realize that the best way to keep the freshness in other people's masterpieces is to place a ban on them. But recently I decided it was my duty to buy a new score of *Le Sacre,* the one from Lyon & Healy's having long since turned to dust. If the formidable pages now had the look of old friends, if the notorious "difficulties" now seemed Haydnesque, the impact remained, the ferocity and newness; the nourishing gold was still there.

This said, do I adore Stravinsky as I adore others who are perhaps less overwhelming—Ravel, for example, or Poulenc? I am dazzled by his intelligence and scared by his force, but my heart is not melted. Has my own work been influenced by his? Not consciously. Not, certainly, as were the works of other Americans during the pre-Craft forties at the peak of his power—Harold Shapero, Arthur Berger, Leo Smit, Irving Fine, Alexei Haieff. Yet

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to deny him is to admit him, to go against him is to go against the century, sheer vanity. No one has been immune.

What more is there to say of this most often written-about musician of modern times? Nobody with even a peripheral claim to culture has been without his word. Consider the gamuts: from the murder mysteries of James M. Cain or Caryle Brahms to the name-dropping souvenirs of Billy Rose or Misia Sert; from the workshop descriptions of Cocteau or Auden to the tersely technical précis of Eric Walter White or Andrew Porter; from the deep gossip of Nicolas Nabokov or Lillian Libman to the businesslike, maybe irrelevant analyses of Suvchinsky or Boulez. Nor was he himself without opinion, his prose serving as guide, sometimes beyond his music, to form the quite considered opinion of others.

What's left to say? Only personal reactions. Mine now will come less through a reappraisal of his career than through a reassessment of my response to that career, and I shall let the reactions emerge from a set of questions.

Why call him great if I don't adore him?

Partly because I too am brainwashed. My nature prefers minor artists to the makers of big statements, which is why I'm drawn to French more than to German music. But there is a more objective reason. Stravinsky is what the French call a *monstre sacré*, one whose greatness depends on chronological place. The sacred monster is a personage who, through public exploitation of his personal accomplishment—an accomplishment always first-rate—grows so much larger than life as to seem no longer human. Generally he is a creative artist, though some performers and politicians fill the bill. He is, so to speak, a violent luxury which, because not really needed to make the world go round, concentrates no less on his product than on his persona and peddles this persona no less to the discriminating aristocrat than to the Philistine bourgeois.

His heyday is the Romantic Era, starting with the Industrial Revolution, when the artist was no longer an appendage of either church or state, and ending with World War II, when the notion of "masterpiece"—that is, a piece by a master—began to smell unpatriotic. Thus Louis XIV or Bach are too early to apply, the one being by definition sacred through no effort of his own, the other being a workman for God; while Frank Sinatra or Aaron Copland are too late, Frank never posing as better than he should be, Aaron ever striving toward a democratic image (assuming that Americans, at least to other Americans, could ever qualify). Beethoven, Byron, Bonaparte and Bernhardt became arch-exemplers, while Picasso, Mann, Casals, De Gaulle and Stravinsky represent the last of a breed, with maybe our own Martha Graham surviving as an anachronism. Ironically, no birthright French composer fits the category.

Is his musical nature German or French—these constituting the sole pair of aesthetics in the whole cosmos, all others (Dutch, Spanish, Siamese, etc.) being subdivisions thereof?

His musical nature is French. Russia is French. To be French is to stress a sense of

proportion, to realize that humor and horror are not mutually exclusive, to be profound while retaining the spiritual levity required (at least in Paris) to get through life without collapsing and to discover the profundity on the surface of things. To be French is to show three sides of a coin. French is witty, and wit, as exemplified by that most stylish of French composers, Franz Joseph Haydn, is ellipsis—knowing what to leave out. Wit depends on tonality, and all French music true to the name is tonal.

To be German is to dig in rather than to spread out, to get to the heart of things, obsessively. As the saying goes, a German joke is no laughing matter. That which under other circumstances seems funny is soberly dissected like Freud's exegesis of humor; that which presently seems funny gets drowned by the very terms that offer it, like Schoenberg's *Von Heute auf Morgan*. Serial music, especially in the theater, lends itself ideally to moods of injustice and dreamlike madness, because the system depends on irresolution. Where Schoenberg uses this lugubrious language for his "comic" opera, pure stultification ensues.

A case could be made that Schoenberg's science, like Freud's, while being irreversibly branded on the globe, can now be viewed as a blind alley. Freud entered a cave that expanded toward ever deeper shadows rather than narrowing toward a ray of light. Schoenberg, in "emancipating" dissonance, ultimately justified flaccidity. Dissonance by definition resolves, otherwise it is not dissonant (dissonant to what?). Where all is dissonance, nothing is dissonance—no relief, and at the same time no tension.

Though younger than Debussy, Schoenberg closed the nineteenth century, while Debussy opened the twentieth. We now recognize Schoenberg's frenzy to have been not innovative but agonized. He was the last romantic, Debussy the first modern. Stravinsky, as Debussy's foremost heir, traced modernism along a diatonic course. Everyone knows he abhorred Meaning in music, let alone deep meaning, but few stress his C-major frivolity, even silliness. Stravinsky was grandly aware of the importance of unimportance.

Yet if at his most serious he doesn't scratch my heart as do Poulenc and Ravel, is this due to the Russian side of his Gallicism? Peter Yates wrote, "His religious music remains, in the Catholic tradition, objective—celebration, ritual, lamentation, narrative; it does not question in the German style, like Schoenberg's the religious ultimate of nature and relationship of man and God." Not that Ravel (who never wrote religious music) or Poulenc (whose heaven was on his sleeve) tried to be deep thinkers like Schoenberg, or were less crystalline or indeed less "French" than Stravinsky; but their sounds concern warm specifics, while his are cool and general.

Is he harmonist or contrapuntist?

Harmonist, in the tradition of France. He wrote a fugue or two (so did Ravel), notably the one that forms the second movement of *Symphony of Psalms,* but we don't recall it as a fugue. Indeed, do we even recall it compared to that piece's celebrated opening sound, one of the composer's two most famous chords? This eight-voice E-minor triad is the essence of verticality and, while born for the orchestra, was

clearly concocted at the keyboard, so symmetrically does it fall beneath the two hands.

"Dance of the Adolescents" from *Le Sacre* contains Stravinsky's other famous chord, also in eight voices, a chord that more than any other represents The Sacre Sound. The Sacre Sound devolves not from the scoring of the chord (string double-stops eccentrically punctuated by horns), nor yet from its daring reiteration (280 times in the first seventy measures), but from the vertical clash between the four top and four bottom parts which we used to hear, at the very least, as bitonality. Today we hear it as an unresolved E-flat dominant seventh over a lowered submediant triad, both having the potent potential for resolving to an A-flat tonic.

Polyphony was Schoenberg's nature, as it must be for those who conceive by tone row, but harmony was Stravinsky's even when, late in life, he too composed according to a series. His music is always heard as tonal (of course, I hear everything as tonal, including Boulez and Babbitt—it's my conditioning—and I contend that everyone, including Babbitt and Boulez, hears everything as tonal), even when apparently sewn with independent threads. By extension, his music is heard harmonically: the entrances of voices on the first pages of *Le Sacre* to the eye may look like horizontal waves, but to the ear they freeze into chunks.

What about his tunes, his rhythm, his color?

His melodic sense, even in vocal music, had an instrumental tang aimed, like Beethoven's or Debussy's, toward the reiterated slogan rather than, like Chopin's or Ravel's, toward the long arching line. Motives, not cantilena. The motives are contagious, being oft repeated. And they are repeated unaltered—that is Stravinsky's signature, a signature adapted to the various periods of his career. Peter Yates said, "A well-conceived conventional theme plus some related episodic material can suffice for a large fugue. It is not the subject but what happens along the way that makes the difference between talent and art. Not the melody of a tone row but its organic shape in consideration of all that can grow from it." This is misleading. Bach's great fugues are great from the outset; the themes are rich in themselves, like Stravinsky's themes, to which often nothing "happens along the way." Meanwhile, the "melody of a tone row" is never a question (rows are frequently presented vertically). Though Stravinsky's melodies are not songlike, they are usually stated, as songs are, with simple support, and Yates is right here: "Seldom in his compositions are more than two things happening simultaneously, [as though he] overcompensated for German expressivity."

Ask anyone what single component most defines Stravinsky, and they will answer rhythm. The rhythm in turn is characterized, like our jazz but unlike anything European, by metrical precision—a persistent motoric beat that does not get faster or slower according to shades of dynamic, or according to nonsymmetrical, continually changing time signatures. Thirty-five years ago Virgil Thomson, discussing the rarity of the non-accelerating crescendo in European musical execution, told us, "Of the

three most famous crescendos in modern music not one is both tonally continuous and rhythmically steady. Strauss' *Elektra* is tonally continuous, rising in waves from beginning to end; but it presupposes no exact metrics. Stravinsky's 'Dance of the Adolescents' and Ravel's *Boléro* do presuppose a metrically strict rendering, but they are not tonally steady crescendos. They are as neatly terraced as any Bach organ fugue." (Thomson could have included an even more famous crescendo, Berg's B-natural-unison interlude in *Wozzeck* which, though European, is surely both tonally continuous and rhymically steady.) Stravinsky's fast music is intrinsically fast, not slow music played fast. If twelve-tone music is never kinetically fast, despite florid figurations, that is because a sense of speed comes through ostinato, and ostinato is by its nature repetitious, which serial composition is not allowed to be.

His color comes through using the ordinary extraordinarily, like the aforementioned E-minor triad from *Symphony of Psalms*. His orchestration is recognizable as French by its avoidance of doublings, recognizable as Stravinsky by its assignment of the least obvious instruments to given phrases. (For an example of no doubling, see any *tutti* passage in *Le Sacre*; for an example of the least obvious instrument, see the renowned bassoon solo that opens the work.) The economics of his orchestration altered with the world's economics, since no one after World War I could afford the mammoth Mahlerian agglomerations, but the principles of his orchestration remained fixed.

The great composers are usually, but not always, fluent and convincing with every variable of music—chords, lines, beats, tunes, hues—and in the several mediums: chamber, opera, symphony, songs. But if the great Stravinsky was, in an age of musical specialists, a general practitioner like Britten, were not Chopin and Schubert, though perhaps no less great, specialists in an age of jacks-of-all-trades?

How was he as a word-setter?

His editor confided that when the manuscript for *Three Songs from William Shakespeare* was submitted for engraving, it was necessary to tell Stravinsky two verses were missing from the opening sonnet. The mortified master asked that the score be returned and that the affair remain secret. The restitution of the forgotten lines appears in the printed version of this song, a version that nevertheless contains what I deem a worse misdemeanor, though sanctioned by many—repeating words at whim.

Does not a song composer who repeats phrases threaten the poem's integrity? Is he not rewriting the poem—a rewrite which, if read aloud without music, he would reject for its now unbalanced meters, false echoes, too obvious redundancies? Poets may well claim the songwriter makes them say twice what was meant to be said only once (Valéry: "Hearing verse set to music is like looking at a painting through a stained-glass window"), or that he forces them to say what they never meant to. Since the setting of a poem to music is necessarily a distorting of that poem, even when the sequence of words remains intact, whoever disturbs the sequence adds insult to injury; he is not serving poetry but al-

lowing poetry to serve him. I'm referring, of course, to a modern composer's use of a poem sufficient unto itself and by a poet with a sense of style—a poem being the most economical, the most compressed of literary forms. I'm not referring to madrigals of yore, whose authors and composers were often the same person—Dowland, Campian—confecting words especially to be repeated in the manner of folk song, randomly. Now, a composer can have his cake and eat it. There is almost no example of a musician's mangling of verse that could not be recomposed, generally by using melisma, so that the poem reverts to its "pure" state while the vocal line retains its identical curve.

That off my chest, let me say Stravinsky was a marvelous composer for the voice. The marvel had nothing to do with proper word-setting, i.e., concern for parsing, declamation, quantities, considerations aimed toward comprehensibility of a sung text. Sound more than sense absorbed him, which is why he was happiest and most convincing in Latin. Since no one knows how that language was spoken, he is free to let accents fall where they may. From the start of *Oedipus Rex,* for instance, the hero's name is thrice intoned, each time with a new stress. In *Les Noçes* the whining grace notes of the bride, the harrumphing swoops of the male guests, the ritual chanting and the moaning yelps, all are novel sounds to vocal literature, apposite and exciting, indifferent to prosodic rules. By treating larynxes like woodwinds, as he revolutionized orchestration by treating woodwinds like strings, Stravinsky deconventionalized common practice.

Then why do I decry his misbegotten Shakespeare Songs? Partly because they are in my native tongue, so I hear too clearly where he errs. But also because at the time of these songs his erring was changing focus. The year 1951 unveiled his longest theater work by far, and his most bloodless: *The Rake's Progress* was his first foray into English, and verbal intelligibility seems now to have been his aim. To join the world's best poet with the world's best composer was a coup only in theory; in fact, poets do not the best librettists make, and Auden, despite his campy couplets, his in-jokes and Dickensian nouns, was too respectful of his collaborator—worse, he succumbed to the amateur practice of combining words that are "helpful" to the composer. Stravinsky, for his part, awash in this jargon, despite a few touching airs and some unexpected colors, produced a tired pastiche with such inadvertently burlesque word-stresses that each character seems to sing with a Russian accent. Undaunted, he immediately composed three more works in English (including a setting of Dylan Thomas' "Do Not Go Gentle," the sole poem of Thomas that musicians seem to have heard of), ever striving to be "correct."

Most of Europe's masterworks have been for human voice. Exceptions are notably from the nineteenth century which, Wagner and Schubert and the Italians notwithstanding, was an instrumental age. Beethoven and Chopin are not primarily remembered for songs and choruses and operas, nor are Brahms, Schumann, Tchaikovsky. Stravinsky too is an exception, in the light of Ravel and Schoenberg, Berg and Brit-

ten. He is the only great composer in history whose greatest works are for dancers.

What of his notorious utterance, fifty years after the fact, "Music is incapable of expressing anything at all"?

Music is the hardest art to speak of because music has no meaning to speak of. Yet we all speak of it, and none more eloquently than composers themselves, especially Stravinsky. Like the *Pietà,* indeed like *Le Sacre du Printemps,* Stravinsky's quips have entered public consciousness. But quips aren't holy writ.

Of course music expresses something, but the "something" cannot be verbalized, that's why it's music. If the arts could express each other, we'd need only one. (One wonders how the canny Stravinsky could approve Goethe's canard that architecture is frozen music.) Mendelssohn was more to the point: "Thoughts expressed to me by music are not too indefinite to be put into words, but on the contrary, too definite."

Was he original?

By "original" people really mean innovative, placing a high value on this Hollywoodian virtue. Yet the most remarkable innovators have never been the finest composers, because innovation and composition are separate professions, and no one has time to excel in both. The big artist steals the raw novelties of the little artist, then cooks them with his own spices.

The question composers hear most often, and the one they most often avoid, is: "Who are your influences?" (implying: "How original are you?"). The question is normal to outsiders who are convinced, quite rightly, that nothing comes of nothing, but who are unable to see, as they can with painters and poets, the thread that sews yesterday to today. Composers all too easily see the thread. Knowing whom they've robbed, their singularity—their private stamp—lies in the act of breathing the special life into silent models, and they aren't about to tell you who lies beneath the disguise.

Despite this theory, Stravinsky's reputation seems secure as both innovator and genius. He himself was always quick to promote his loves through pastiche (notably of Pergolesi and Tchaikovsky in *Pulcinella* and *Le Baiser de la Feé)* while belittling the procedure in others (notably Poulenc, whom he credited with giving plagiarism a new meaning). Yet the road from pastiche to paraphrase is short. If *Le Sacre du Printemps* sprang in its unique glory full blown from its creator's head, no one ever points out Stravinsky's shameless borrowings.

Is not the extended strident solo piano clattering above nervous strings in the first movement of his Symphony in Three Movements, written in 1943, too close for comfort to Bartók's extended strident solo piano clattering above nervous strings in the second movement of his Music for Strings, Percussion and Celesta, composed six years earlier? What of the famous *Petrushka* texture, recognizable in a split second? Would these close-harmony roulades for a pair of clarinets have been scored that way in 1910, had not Ravel in his *Rapsodie Espagnole* (1908) invented an identical scoring?

More disconcerting are three samples of parallel octaves meandering over forty years from Mussorgsky's *Sunless* cycle

through Debussy's *Nuages* to Stravinsky's *Rossignol*. Getting us before we get him, Stravinsky acknowledges his debt to Verdi during the making of *Oedipus Rex*, though despite his E-flat tenor air in Latin being frankly a variation on Verdi's E-flat tenor air ("Ingemisco") in Latin from the Requiem, who would mistake the one author for the other? Would the rhythm beneath Jocasta's harangue, also from *Oedipus Rex*, have come off quite as it does had Bartók not written his first quartet in 1908? And so on.

Did I know him?

I don't know. I was thrice in his presence. In 1944, Haieff asked several of us to meet Stravinsky for tea at Kyriena Siloti's. Did we shake hands? I can't recall—too many people, the room was dark, I said nothing. Stravinsky withdrew early, just as Copland was arriving. Aaron found this relay perfectly appropriate—one good deed deserves another.

That same year I attended a rehearsal in a radio studio of *Persephone*, Stravinsky conducting, with Madeleine Milhaud as *speakerine*. We did not truly meet then, either, but that was the first of many times I would be charmed by the aspect of Stravinsky on the podium, his small dancer's frame, lilting and sexual, wordlessly describing the definitive performance. "I conduct," he told Gregg Smith, "so as to learn my own music."

In 1954 I was forbidden entrance to the Rome Opera at the same time as Stravinsky for not being in formal attire. Next day the event had become a *cause célèbre*, my name linked to the maestro's in newspapers throughout the world. So much for reflected glory.

How bodes the Met's triple bill?

Well, there is only one genuine opera, *Le Rossignol*. The oratorio, *Oedipus Rex*, is strongly visual, however, and as a sung work its inclusion is plausible. But to mount *Le Sacre du Printemps*, a ballet, and an unsuccessful one, is vanity.

We talk about a creator's "periods," though composers have them less noticeably than other artists. But with Stravinsky the stylistic plateaux are as neatly definable as those of Picasso or Henry James, and within one of his pieces, *Le Rossignol*, his personal phylogeny is ontologically recapitulated. Composed over many years, it reflects three manners—impressionist amorphism, post-*Sacre* exoticism and a foretaste of the belt-tightening 1920s, which in turn anticipates the so-called neoclassicism of the 1930s. The prelude is dispensable, not because it is unoriginal but because its not very interesting material is never brought back during the course of the three-act spectacle. The piece should begin straight off with the gorgeous Fisherman's song, which is the opera's binding force. Heard four times in the course of the work, this extended Gershwinesque blues is among the few cantilenas Stravinsky ever penned. Yet it is not a "vocal" melody: the text could be any text, stretched over a prewritten tune. As with Poulenc's *Dialogues*, wherein the best music—the Latin choruses—is extrinsic to the Bernanos script, here the best music is adornment to the Andersen tale.

A 1952 French production of *Oedipus Rex* reunited Cocteau and Stravinsky after many years. Cocteau not only declaimed

the speaker's role, he refashioned the twelve-foot puppets of Remo Bufano. I recall him before the dress rehearsal, happily hammering at the props (Parisian stagehands' unions are more lax than ours). But that year Cocteau was out of favor with the fickle French. Though we ourselves have placed them there, we can grow to resent and crush theatrical idols for their stance upon the pedestal. If this has not been the case for such moral irreproachables as Shaw, O'Neill or Arthur Miller, it has been the case for Wilde and Williams and Jean Cocteau.

At the gala the elderly, perfumed public, laced with Camus-oriented youth chained to an outmoded ritual, jeered each appearance of Cocteau until he raised a famous hand to stop the orchestra. "If you don't respect me and my work," he pleaded, "at least respect Stravinsky, who is a great composer." The hall grew still, the music started up, Cocteau sat down again on the little stool at the edge of the stage, motionless and shaken. Nobody missed the irony when he pronounced the final lines—the very lines Stravinsky has discounted as superfluous—when the king finds himself snared in his own trap: " He falls. He falls from high. . . . Farewell, poor Oedipus, we loved you."

As for the score, the starkly iterated, inexorable triplet pulse, like a column supporting the male chorus, is a monument of musical terror among other monuments. Yet the terror of Sophocles (as is ever the case with updated Greek tragedies) resounds more purposefully than the contributions of either Cocteau or Stravinsky.

As Sophocles to adapters, so *Le Sacre* to choreographers. This ballet is forever undanceable, partly because the story is taken at face value but mainly because the score smashes all contenders. True, Paul Taylor, avoiding the risky "pagan" tone of every version since 1913, did make a go of it, and he did ape Nijinsky's knock-kneed profiles. But Taylor's success owes much to the four-hand reduction. The black-and-white keyboard offsets the black-and-white comic-strip yarn in the black-and-white modernistic décor, and the Nijinsky stance is brash allusion, not sober homage. The music's glamour, however, rests in orchestral color. Were Taylor dumb enough to use the full score, his *Sacre* would turn from comico-spooky to monotono-silly. (Disney's technicolor version in *Fantasia* wasn't bad. He inclined, as they say out there, to Mickey-Mouse the music, but he if anyone had the right.) Yet just as Satie's *Parade* is too weak for a viable ballet, Stravinsky's *Sacre* is too strong.

For the sake of a point I have, like dozens of musicologists, weighed Stravinsky against Schoenberg. Despite what even the man himself contended, Stravinskian flavor relies on a core of constant tonality, permitting a colossal scope. The scope nonetheless has frontiers—not defects but self-imposed limitations. From the bittersweet violence of the big ballets to the luxuriant chutzpah of the two-piano pieces, Stravinsky is powerful and profound, sparse and playful, indeed everything we connect with great masters, except pessimistic. The music is simply never depressing like, say Bartók's *Bluebeard*, Berg's *Lulu* or Schoenberg's almost anything.

On the other hand, are those composers, with all their might, ever witty? It could be argued that wit, like charm, must reside in all genius (why, even Beethoven had charm!), or conversely that all genius must house a certain morosity. How to pursue a matter so clearly of taste? Which brings back my gambit of French-versus-German aesthetic.

Stravinsky's glibness was grave. His varied career produced few weak works. He robbed many a nest along the way, but some Borgesian alchemy arranged for each egg to hatch out another Igor—and that includes his accounts of "The Volga Boatman," "The Star-Spangled Banner" and "Happy Birthday to You." So happy birthday to you, dear centenarian maestro, for whom only the world's end will prevent ten thousand more.

Braille Music Forum: New Technology for Writing and Reading Braille Music: Cassette Braillers

by Bettye Krolick

This column, which frequently provides reminders and explanations of braille music code rules, also attempts to convey information about developments and changes in the braille music field. Many people read and write down music in braille. Blind individuals compose all kinds of music: religious, popular, and country songs, jazz, and classical music; they braille college assignments for music theory, harmony, and composition, and they copy music for their own use. Sighted braille music transcribers transcribe print music into braille music. The cassette brailler has affected braille writing and reading, music included.

From August 1979 to December 1980, I participated in a formal study of two types of cassette braillers, testing their capabilities to effectively display, manipulate, and record braille music. Sponsored by the California Department of Education, this project was designed to study the special braille codes, of which music is one. Three certified braille music transcribers (Ethel Schuman, Carolyn Card, and myself) studied the application of the braille music code to the Digicassette and the VersaBraille, two cassette braillers. We subsequently helped to compile guidelines for the transcription of music braille on these devices.

Cassette Braillers

In contrast to a Perkins brailler which embosses braille dots on paper, a cassette brailler shows a line of braille electronically on a tactile display board. When its keys are depressed, electronic signals are produced, and the computer within the machine can store the braille, record it on cassette tape, and/or tactilely display it for reading. Some cassette braillers display braille for reading and also record braille for transcribing purposes; others are limited to reading.

The braille is displayed by dots created from round-headed pins that move up and down to form braille characters. One line of characters is displayed until the desired passage is read; the next line appears when the reader depresses a special key.

An important feature of a cassette brailler is the machine's ability to search for materials stored in the computer's memory. For a musician this means that a hymn, piece, or song in a collection can be quickly located by title or number, for example.

Digicassette

The first machine we tested was the Digicassette, model DC-20-M, a flat, metal box about 11'' x 4'' x 2''. Six keys and a space bar, a slot to insert a cassette tape, a tactile display board, and three additional control keys are located on the top of this machine. Other buttons and devices, some for the use of audio equipment, are found on the sides of the machine.

The electronic signal for each braille cell sounds as a high-pitched blip. On the

Digicassette, braille is recorded in units of 120 cells, which we called blocks. There was a short space of silence on the tape between each block. When listening to the signals one could hardly distinguish between individual blips, but the silence between the blocks of 120 cells, each block being recorded in less than a second of tape time, was audible. Because each signal occupies so little space in the computer's memory, the equivalent of over 360 pages of paper braille can be recorded on one sixty-minute cassette. Hence, principal advantages of cassette over embossed braille are that the storage, handling, and mailing of braille should be easier if cassette tapes replace bulky paper volumes.

Action of keys. The first difference we found between Perkins and cassette braillers was the feel and action of the keys and slight difference in spacing. The keys were depressed without striking or pounding and, in fact, the strong pressure required for mechanical embossing could be destructive if used on a Digicassette or similar machine. A coordinated action on all the keys, instead of brute strength, was necessary to achieve the proper electronic signal. At first I produced some misformed characters, but after becoming used to the new action, I found it much less tiring and considerably easier than the Perkins brailler.

Tactile display. When we used the Digicassette to write, the characters appeared on the display one at a time as they were brailled. The first character appeared at the right end of the board in the twentieth-cell position. As the next character was brailled, the first one moved back to the nineteenth-cell position, and the new character appeared at the end of the line. This backward motion is awkward at first, but since the music can still be read from left to right, and the last character brailled can always be examined at the end of the braille line, the arrangement is workable. As the twenty-first character is brailled, the first one disappears from the left-hand side of the display. All of the characters, however, remain in the memory of the computer. When a 120-cell block is complete, the transcriber can use the control button to begin again with the first display character.

Editing. When braille is embossed on paper, an entire sheet must be re-embossed to make substantive changes. Electronic signals, on the other hand can be easily changed wherever needed without disturbing or recopying all the braille. At any time before the material is recorded, the braille can be changed. Characters can be reformed and characters and spaces can be deleted or inserted, providing the total number of cells in the block does not exceed 120. Because of the 120-cell limit, one of our recommendations was that a number of blank spaces be left at the end of each block during the preliminary transcription process.

The following are some ways that the editing capability can be used: (1) correct information in the wrong order can be reordered; (2) dynamic markings can be inserted after the notes have been brailled; (3) conductors' rehearsal instructions can be inserted in the braille score; (4) fingering or pedaling signs can be changed, inserted, or deleted; and (5) a complex

measure can be brailled more than one way. After the best solution is selected, other possibilities can be deleted.

It was easy to edit on both machines before the unit was recorded. However, on the Digicassette it was much more difficult to edit after the block was committed to the tape. This problem is supposed to be corrected in newer models. We also recommended that the Digicassette should add a back-up mechanism to enable the user to refer back easily to the preceding block.

VersaBraille

The other machine tested was the VersaBraille, model P-1, a machine that was similar in size to the Digicassette, although somewhat heavier. Both machines can run from a battery for several hours, and both can be plugged into 110-volt household current for use or for recharging. Compared to the Digicassette, the VersaBraille has more control buttons, all of which are located on top of the machine. It also has the six keys and space bar for transcription, the slot for the cassette tape, and the twenty-cell tactile display. We used a C-60 cassette on the VersaBraille, this length being specified because before any transcription can take place, the tape has to be formatted into segments, an automatic computer process initiated by the user. These tape segments are called pages because they contained approximately 1,000 characters, the same as a page of paper braille with twenty-five lines, forty cells per line. One segment of the tape is reserved for chapter titles. The transcriber determines whether the tape should contain one or more chapters and the number of pages in each chapter. To a musician this means the chapter title (limited to ten characters) could indicate the name of a composition, a movement, or an exercise, and each chapter could contain as many pages as necessary to finish the work. The most important unit, however, is the page, and in actual use it consists of 999 characters or spaces.

Action of keys, tactile display, and editing. The action of the keys is similar to the Digicassette. The tactile display is also twenty cells and has a similar and comfortable feel. Instead of a touch-switch above the end of the line, a narrow bar, which can be tapped at any point to change the display, runs the entire length of the display. We felt that both systems were quite adequate for the purpose of line changing. As music is transcribed on the VersaBraille, it appears at the beginning of the line rather than at the end as on the Digicassette. The display fills the screen from left to right until twenty cells are used. Then the beginning of the music disappears all at once, not one cell at a time as on the Digicassette. The VersaBraille cannot divide a word (or continuous string of characters), so the display jumps to the first space in the music and displays the music from that point forward. If a measure occupied more than twenty cells (as often happens), we inserted a music hyphen followed by a space at a logical place for the measure to be divided. As on the Digicassette, every character and space of the basic unit remained in the computer's memory to be recalled and displayed easily even though the basic unit consisted of 999 rather than 120 cells. Editing (in-

sertions, deletions, reformation of characters within the page or after recording) was accomplished in slightly different ways, but was just as easy and practical as on the Digicassette.

Comparing VersaBraille and Digicassette

Of the two models used, VersaBraille P-1 and Digicassette DC-20-M, the testers found the VersaBraille more satisfactory for braille music writing. VersaBraille had many more control keys than Digicassette. It took longer to get used to them, but the keys were arranged logically, and more functions were possible on the VersaBraille. One of these functions was the ability to refer back to lines, pages, or chapters. The larger basic unit (999 characters vs. 120) provided more flexibility in editing, especially in making insertions. With the VersaBraille we could edit material at any point in the completed part of the tape just as easily as we could on the page still in process, which was not true on the Digicassette. Because the Digicassette braille display of this model paid no attention to measure boundaries, it was necessary to count cells and to insert spaces in each line of music to avoid incorrect measure divisions. The search features were more developed on the VersaBraille and were easier to use with the larger basic unit of a page.

Summary

No hard copy. Most cassette braillers presently will not produce embossed pages. If hard copy is required, it sometimes may still be faster to transcribe the music using a cassette brailler with editing capability and then to make a master for duplication or distribution using the Perkins brailler. Future developments may eliminate this disadvantage.

One-line display. The present limitation of a one-line display is unworkable for much music. A one-line display usually renders a bar-over-bar score meaningless: words cannot be inserted above the melody in a song; the right hand cannot appear above the left hand in piano music; and the three-line parallel of words, melody, and chord symbols in popular music cannot be used. The music transcribers participating in this project made some suggestions about possible use of other formats written in paragraphs rather than parallels. (These suggestions are meant for individuals transcribing for their own use.) Write to Clearinghouse—Depository for Handicapped Students, California State Department of Education, 721 Capitol Hall, Sacramento, CA 95814 to obtain these guidelines.

For technical information on Digicassette, write Triformation Systems, Inc., P.O. Box 2433, Stuart, FL 33494; for VersaBraille, write Telesensory Systems, Inc., 3408 Hillview Avenue, Palo Alto, CA 94304. Comments, questions, and material for inclusion in Braille Music Forum should be addressed to Bettye Krolick, 602 Ventura Road, Champaign, IL 81820. Send material in braille, print, or on cassette tape.

New Music Materials

The following works are available on loan from the Music Section, National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, Library of Congress, Washington, DC 20542.

Press braille and most recorded materials may also be purchased from their respective producers. Large-print scores are available on loan only. These listings show, where possible, composer, title, print publisher, producer, and Music Section catalog number.

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Braille

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Announcement

Three New Recorded Courses Available

Learning to Play Recorder (Alto and Tenor), Levels 1 and 2, which parallels its companion course, *Learning to Play Recorder (Soprano and Tenor),* Levels 1 and 2, has been produced especially for the NLS music program. A beginning instruction method suitable for people with or without previous musical experience, it incorporates folksongs, familiar tunes, and composed music in solos and duets, some with guitar accompaniments. The course emphasizes playing by ear and also covers the fundamentals of music, offering a solid introduction to music theory.

The producer of the course, Jean Sell, teaches music at the California School for the Blind in Fremont, California. She plays recorders, guitar, clarinet, and numerous other instruments.

A Beginning Accordion Method for the Blind: Supplementary Repertoire provides additional compositions for each of the lessons in *A Beginning Accordion Method for the Blind.* The *Supplementary Repertoire* includes the following arrangements for the piano-stradella or "120 bass" accordion: "Merrily We Roll Along," "Pierrot," "Du, du liegst mir im Herzen," "Deck Thyself with Gladness," "Jingle Bells," "Bridge over the Avignon," "Alouette," "Frere Jacques," "My Country, 'Tis of Thee," "Aura Lee," "Finlandia," "Russian's Sailor's Dance," "We Three Kings," "For He's a Jolly Good Fellow," and "Vive l'amour." The parent course, *A Beginning Accordion Method for the Blind,* by Robert McMahan, requires no previous musical training or knowledge of print or braille music.

The third new course, *A Beginning Chromatic Free Bass Accordion Method for the Blind,* was also produced for the NLS music program by accordionist and teacher Robert McMahan. Designed for the capabilities of the chromatic free bass instrument, the instruction method uses familiar songs and themes in teaching basic musical concepts and playing techniques.

Mr. McMahan, an award-winning, nationally known performer, teaches music theory at the Peabody Institute of the Johns Hopkins University and Morgan State University and is a doctoral student in composition at the Peabody Institute.

Haydn: A Celebration of His 250th Birthday

by H. C. Robbins Landon
Ovation
March 1982

Joseph Haydn (born Rohrau, Austria 1732; died Vienna 1809) used to say that he was the typical case of "something coming out of nothing," or as we would put it today, his is the quintessential story of "rags to riches." Even though his origins were not quite so obscure as some nineteenth century writers imagined—Haydn's father was a village magistrate as well as a respected master-wheelwright and a successful farmer—Joseph lived perilously close to starvation as an adolescent. From being an unknown and ill-trained musician (he later acknowledged, "I wrote diligently but not quite correctly"), Haydn rose to become the most popular composer the world had ever seen, and one of the wealthiest. His was a success story rivalling that of Abraham Lincoln.

Internationally recognized as a preeminent authority on eighteenth century music, H. C. Robbins Landon has published several books on Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven. In 1949 he founded the Haydn Society, which began to issue the Collected Edition of Haydn's works and also produced a number of Haydn recordings. He is a Contributing Music Editor of *Ovation*.
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But we must consider the even more extraordinary ups and downs of his posthumous reputation. For, paradoxically, Haydn was also to become the most neglected of all great composers. Lauded and loved throughout Europe in the second half of the eighteenth century, Haydn's music fell almost completely out of favor in the nineteenth. Patronized as Papa Haydn, he was dismissed as a genial but placid and old-fashioned artist. Since then, of course, Haydn's reputation has enjoyed a spectacular renaissance. The way back to the present level of interest in his music has been long and hard, and the renaissance has, curiously, taken place primarily in the Anglo-Saxon world (though the scholarship has been largely German and Hungarian).

When Haydn's first symphonies, trios, and quartets began to be circulated within the Austrian monarchy toward the end of the 1750s they achieved a phenomenal and immediate success. To be sure, symphonies by his contemporaries were already numerous, but within a few years Haydn's had almost totally replaced them in the public's affection. His early quartets, which were actually *divertimenti* in five movements (including two minuets), were at once played the length and breadth of Europe—even in Italy, where the composer's works were largely ignored.

There were several factors that contributed to this enormous early popularity. The first was undoubtedly the open, winning charm of Haydn's music, his folk-tune-like melodies, the Italianate serenades of his slow movements and especially the beguiling minuets and trios so evocative of his native Austria. Secondly, and of more

lasting influence, was the strict discipline and meticulous craftsmanship with which these early instrumental works were informed. Haydn soon displayed a striking ability to marshal his forces; to achieve a climax, or series of climaxes, in the development sections; to infuse outwardly simple music with a sense of urgency and even dramatic force. This systematic exploitation of his existing material was to become the hallmark of Haydn's music, and the years to come the process would be deepened and enriched. Finally, a third important factor was Haydn's introduction of wit into music. In earlier times, one could find humor, imitational effects from nature (e.g., a dog barking in Vivaldi's *Four Seasons*), but hardly wit. This was also the contribution most characteristic of the eighteenth century that Haydn made to the art of music. Earlier periods had displayed the other characteristics that made Haydn's art popular—charm, discipline, dramatic effects, and so on, but with the introduction of wit on a broad scale (and sometimes of a highly intellectual bent), the face of Western music was permanently changed.

Haydn's early music also included some religious works which became popular, but on the whole it was his instrumental music which, in the 1760s, established his European fame. It was not until the 1770s that his vocal music had anything more than local distribution.

Until about 1758, Haydn had only occasional patrons, such as the Duernberg family, but from that date until his death in 1809, he was attached to two aristocratic houses—first (1758–60?), to that of Count Morzin, and (from May 1761) to the great Hungarian magnates, the Princes Esterhazy—Haydn was particularly fortunate in his connections with these two houses. Both they and the Fuernbergs before them were fastidious, intelligent and generous patrons. Without Count Morzin's great orchestra, including horn players of exceptional ability (their names are unfortunately not known to us), it is unlikely that Haydn's symphonic style could have flowered so quickly and in such profusion.

The distribution of Haydn's music centered round the Austrian professional copyists who, in those days, fulfilled the position that music publishers would later occupy. Haydn, as soon as he was able to amass a small amount of capital, could engage the services of these copyists and sell authentic manuscripts of his works to patrons throughout the Austrian monarchy. Much of this material—mostly in Hungary and Czechoslovakia—remained undiscovered until after the Second World War. The scribes employed by Haydn soon began to do a brisk trade in Haydn's works on their own account, selling copies to such regular patrons as the Austrian monasteries, German princely houses, but—most important—also to the music publishing center of the world at that time: Paris. All this activity was probably taking place not only without Haydn's approval but even without his knowledge.

In 1764, French editions of Haydn's symphonies and quartets began to appear and their immediate success ensured a steady stream of further Haydn publications in Paris and, later, Lyon. But when there

was not enough genuine Haydn to satisfy the avid interest of French amateurs, the unscrupulous Viennese copyists began to substitute works by followers of Haydn, such as his brother Johann Michael Haydn, Leopold Hofmann, or Carl Ditters (later von Dittersdorf). These works were mixed with real Haydn and all presented as genuine. Very soon, French publishers began their own substitutions, of which the most famous was the erasure of the composer's name on the plates of some string quartets by Pater Roman Hoffstetter, a monk from Amorbach in southern Germany, and the substitution of Haydn's name. This was the origin of the so-called Opus 3 Quartets incorrectly attributed to Haydn, including the celebrated Serenade from Opus 3, No. 5.

By the end of the 1760s and during the decade from 1770 to 1780, there was as much, if not more, spurious Haydn being sold in Paris as there were publications of genuine works. The confusion which arose as a result can be easily imagined, and it was no wonder that cultivated French, British, or Dutch audiences must have formed a very inadequate idea of Haydn's real style, since by 1775 there were many entire *opera* of false Haydn circulating not only in Paris but soon thereafter in Amsterdam, London and Berlin. There is no record that Haydn had any connection with music publishers before 1774, and not on any large scale until 1780, when Artaria of Vienna became his principal publishers and maintained this association for the following decade. In the 1780s, Haydn also established contact with foreign publishers in London, Paris, Lyon, Speyer and Berlin; by the time he arrived in England in 1791 his published works and fame were truly international.

After becoming full *Kapellmeister* to Prince Nicolaus Esterhazy in 1766 upon the death of Gregor Joseph Werner, Haydn was able to turn his attention to vocal music, and the second half of the 1760s is marked by a whole series of vocal works both sacred and secular. The religious works that now began to circulate throughout Catholic Austria included Masses, a *Salve Regina* with organ solo (many of these works include such parts for organ solo which the composer himself played), a *Stabat Mater*—the first vocal work by Haydn to achieve international fame (it was printed in Paris and London)—and many smaller religious works. In the 1760s Haydn composed a whole series of cantatas to celebrate the name-day or some other important event in Prince Nicolaus's life; these cantatas have, up to the time of present writing, remained unpublished but Haydn salvaged some of the music by turning it, or causing it to be turned, into smaller pieces of music for church use. The same procedure was also applied to Haydn's final cantata of this series, *Applausus,* composed in 1768 for Zwettl Abbey, but which became widely known in Austria in the form of several *contrafacta* (as such adaptations are termed).

The most interesting vocal works of this period in Haydn's life are undoubtedly the operas that he wrote at regular intervals for Prince Nicolaus Esterhazy's amusement from 1762 to 1784. Largely unknown outside the Esterhazy household in Haydn's lifetime and for the most part unpublished

until the second half of the twentieth century, these Haydn operas have been relaunched with considerable success 200 years after their much-applauded premieres in the obscurity of Eisenstadt, Pressburg and Eszterhaza. Haydn undoubtedly thought that these operas were his major works. In the list of compositions mentioned in his autobiographical sketch of 1776, the only works that Haydn mentions in any detail are his operas, an oratorio, and the *Stabat Mater*. The huge upheaval that occurs in Haydn's music during the second half of the 1760s is not documented except in the actual music itself; but there, the new style was such that its effect on Haydn's contemporaries must have been overwhelming and even alarming. Musicologists have squabbled in unenlightened fashion over the choice of a term to describe this period which has been called "Romantic Crisis," "Sturm und Drang" (a term borrowed from a German literary movement and, in particular, a play of that title by Klinger in 1776), and so on. Whatever phrase we choose to use, Haydn's style was now marked by a new urgency, a great interest in minor keys as the vehicle of passion, a renaissance of contrapuntal forms such as the fugue, and above all an overriding sense of power and drama. It was, nevertheless, Haydn's instrumental works that spread his name not only throughout Europe but to the New World as well; and while in some quarters his new style with its juxtaposition of the comic and serious was not always appreciated (e.g., in north Germany—see the bitter remarks in Haydn's autobiographical sketch), it is no exaggeration when we state that by the time Haydn set off for England he was Europe's most celebrated and popular composer.

What had led to this extraordinary state of affairs? Primarily, it was the new and so-called "popular" style of Haydn's music in the 1770s and 1780s that had conquered the hearts of the connoisseurs. This "popular" style was a judicious admixture of tunes which, if not directly folk melodies, sounded just like them; of a witty, droll style which took much of its language from the fashionable *opera buffa;* and of learned writing (fugues, etc.) which, combined with Haydn's impeccable sense of form and length, interested the professional musicians, such as C.P.E. Bach and Mozart. Haydn's music, in fact, appealed to amateur and professional alike, and to all classes—from the French merchant in Lyon to the Russian prince in St. Petersburg. It was an entirely new phenomenon and one that Europe had never before experienced on this broad and international scale.

When Haydn went to England at the instigation of the great impresario J.P. Salomon, he escaped from a position which had become irksome and provincial, and a lifestyle "in which he had become grey" (Griesinger). In the course of his two visits to England, Haydn became financially independent (he earned the equivalent of 24,000 gulden, which sum represented twenty-four years' income at the annual rate of Prince Nicolaus's pension for his *Kapellmeister)* and grew even more famous; but most important, he created a whole series of masterpieces which, even in the "bad" period of Haydn's reputation

in the nineteenth century, were regularly performed all over the civilized world—the *Rider* Quartet, the Piano Sonata No. 62 in E flat (1794), the *Surprise, Miracle, Military, Clock, Drum Roll* and *London* symphonies, the song "My mother bids me bind my hair," the *Andante con variazioni* in F Minor for piano, and the *Gypsy Rondo* trio. His celebrated "popular" style was enriched, broadened and deepened by the glorious experience of London, where the audiences shouted their applause and King George III offered him lodgings in Windsor Castle.

On his return to Vienna, Haydn took back a libretto which Salomon had given him. Haydn's friend and patron, Gottfried van Swieten, collaborated with the composer in the preparation of his sublime oratorio, *The Creation* (1798), which rapidly became its composer's most celebrated work and was translated into many languages. Van Swieten and Haydn had provided a German and English text with which the work was first published by the composer in 1800. The imposing list of subscribers at the beginning of the handsome full score showed how many friends Haydn had throughout Europe (but not in Spain, Portugal or Italy, although his music had been extremely popular in the 1780s in Spain). *The Creation* was followed by *The Seasons* (1801), also a success but nothing like that of its immediate predecessor *(The Seasons* was never performed in England during Haydn's lifetime, for instance). While these oratorios represented, as it were, the public side of Haydn's life, he was also occupied from 1796 to 1802 with a series of great masses for the name-day of Princess Marie Hermenegild Esterhazy, the wife of Nicolaus II (who succeeded to the princely title in 1794). These masses kept Haydn's name alive in many a parish church in Austria and Bavaria throughout the nineteenth century.

In the 1790s, Haydn attracted a new publisher, the famous house of Breitkopf & Haertel in Leipzig, which issued the authentic first editions of these late masses as well as the oratorios *The Seven Words* and *The Seasons*. Although composing vocal music was now Haydn's chief occupation, he continued in instrumental works with the Trumpet Concerto (now arguably his most popular work), the Quartets of Opp. 76 (including *The Emperor),* 77 and 103 (unfinished) and the final piano trios for English publishers. In 1797 he captured the hearts of a wartime nation with his hymn to the Emperor Franz (Francis) II, "Gott erhalte" (or as Haydn called it, "Volcks Lied"), which is now the national anthem of the German Federal Republic.

When Haydn died in 1809, he was without question the most celebrated composer in the world. But as often happens—the cases of Wren and Balthasar Neumann, [illegible] of the world's greatest architects, spring to mind—the pendulum swung rapidly and brutally. Mozart's music was, in the beginning of the new century, becoming widely known for the first time—only a fraction of his enormous *oeuvre* had been printed during his short lifetime (1756–1791)—and together with it that of Beethoven (born in 1770), whose mighty compositions—including symphonies, quartets, sonatas, masses and the opera *Fidelio*—soon forced into permanent ob-

livion such successful contemporaries in the instrumental field as Ignaz Pleyel, Adalbert Gyrowetz or Leopold Kozeluch (all of whom had been more popular, in 1791, than Mozart), just as Mozart's operas gradually erased from the repertoire such stalwarts as Paisiello, Cimarosa, Sarti, Gazzaniga and Piccinni. It was soon hard going for Haydn's music, too. Robert Schumann, in 1840, found that the *Military* Symphony not only had "something pigtail about it," but the second movement's "Turkish music" sounded to him "childish and tasteless." A year later he echoed general opinion that Haydn "no longer has any deeper interest for our age."

As the conductor Felix von Weingartner was preparing for the press the first forty symphonies by Haydn in the then new *Gesamtausgabe* (1907), he wrote that same year elsewhere: "Much of Haydn, Mozart and Schubert, most of Weber, enjoy an artistic existence only in the light of the imperishable works of this master [Beethoven], but already belong to past history; not true of Beethoven, if we perhaps except some youthful works and *pieces d'occasion*."

No one, in 1907, could have foreseen the enormous change in Mozart's status which began in the 1920s and 1930s and was "codified" in the big international sesquicentennial celebrations (notably in Austria and the U.S.A.) of 1941. Haydn and Mozart used to be lumped together as the superficial scullery-musicians of a heartless rococo age. "Even their pathos went scarcely more than skin deep," wrote Robert Haven Schauffler in 1927. Within a generation, Mozart became almost as popular as Beethoven and today it is indeed a question if Mozart does not represent for many thinking people in the West the zenith of European music. In the wake of this extraordinary Mozart renaissance, Haydn's popularity increased. It was in particular thanks to the wireless and, even more, to the long-playing record that Haydn's music was brought back into the living rooms of many people, mainly in the Anglo-Saxon world (in Austria and Germany, Haydn is no more popular than he was thirty years ago, and scholarly interest in his music or life is scarcely more than superficial). For many seasons in the period 1946–80, for example, the Vienna Philharmonic subscription concerts have included not one single work by Haydn, a situation unthinkable in similar circumstances in England. The present Haydn renaissance, in fact, must be attributed principally and at first almost exclusively to Great Britain, the only country where Haydn's popularity may have waned but never entirely died out, even in the nineteenth century and the early years of the twentieth.

Whether this present level of interest in Haydn will extend beyond the borders of the Anglo-Saxon world is something that only time will tell; but there are signs that Haydn is again becoming popular in France and this, interestingly enough, largely through the operas (Lyon is now staging a new Haydn opera production every year). Certainly the 250th anniversary of Haydn's birth in 1982 provides a unique opportunity for reconsideration, revaluation, and revitalization.

The Lute: Instrument for the Ages

by Douglas Alton Smith
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Among the ancient musical instruments of the world, the lute occupies a unique position. It and its predecessor, the pandoura, are the ancestors of virtually all modern string instruments that have necks. This means, of course, the members of the guitar, banjo, and violin families are distant cousins. The lute, which had a short neck and a larger body with a wooden soundboard, is thought to have evolved in Mesopotamia (a region in southwest Asia) in the second millenium B.C. The pandoura, which had a long neck and a small body with a skin head, is documented to be even older than that.

The lute became the most popular instrument among the Arabs, and medieval Arab philosophers even found the metaphysical unity of the cosmos and humanity on the fretboard and strings of the oud. At some point in time, the lute (called al'ud or oud, "the wood") was carried from the Middle East, by traders, to China and Japan, where its descendants are still played today.

It also found its way—with the help of returning Crusaders, and Moorish and Saracen invaders—to Europe, via Spain and Italy. By the sixteenth century, the lute was the most prestigious instrument of all. Italian princes and the English queen learned to play it, and their subjects imitated them.

During the Renaissance and the Baroque periods, almost all European lute music was written in the form of tablature, the same system of notation widely used today in teaching folk-style string instrument playing. There were three systems of tablature: French tablature, which had six lines (representing the strings) with letters indicating the frets; Italian tablature, which used six string lines with numbers to indicate frets (the bottom line indicated the top string, in reverse of the French system); and German tablature, which was diagrammed sideways, dispensing with lines and using only letters to indicate strings and frets. After 1600, French tablature came to be used all over Europe, except in Italy.

The greatest Italian lutenist of the Renaissance was Francesco da Milano (1497–1543), who was known as "il divino" for his divine playing. Francesco left about 100 solo pieces for lute in the form of fantasies and ricercars, two of the most common abstract musical forms of the era. The works have been published in modern editions, and many have been recorded.

Englishman John Dowland (1562–1626) is probably the most popular lutenist/composer today. His surviving repertoire is of a size comparable to da Milano's; but in addition to fantasies, Dowland also wrote many dance pieces—particularly in the forms known as pavans and galliards—and songs with lute accompaniment. Many of Dowland's pieces are considered to be

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among the best in the entire lute repertoire.

During the seventeenth century, the popularity of the lute declined slowly, even though the French cultivated the instruments, and theorbos (lutes with extended necks) were actively used all over Europe for accompanying singing and other instruments. In the eighteenth century, the lute was played by a diminishing number of players in the German-speaking countries; yet, some of the finest lute music ever written came from this era—notably works by composers J.S. Bach (1685–1750) and Silvius Leopold Weiss (1686–1750). By the end of the eighteenth century, the guitar rose to prominence, obscuring the lute for about 100 years.

Types of Lutes

Many were the sizes and many were the shapes of lutes throughout the ages, but several characteristics remained constant throughout each period of the instrument's development. The lute has a vaulted back made of at least nine ribs; a neck with gut frets wrapped around it; a pegbox that is perpendicular to the neck; and a soundhole that is a rosette carved, with a knife, out of the top. Another characteristic of the lute is its light weight: even a large bass lute weighs only about two pounds. Strings, arranged in pairs, have varied in number and in musical range throughout the ages.

During the medieval era, several sizes of lutes were played; but in the Renaissance, a whole family evolved, just as families evolved for the viol, violin, recorder, and other wood instruments. The seven lute sizes ranged from the small octave lute, about a foot and a half in length, to the contrabass lute, with a *string* length of three feet. The intermediate sizes—the descant lutes and alto lutes—were most commonly used for solo playing, and the tenor and bass lutes were used for both solo and accompaniment playing.

In 1589, the most exotic European lute, the theorbo, was invented in Florence. It carried an octave of contrabass strings on an extended neck and was originally called chitarrone ("large cithara") because, in imitation Greek dramas staged at the Florentine court, the inventor liked to adopt the character of an ancient cithara player. The instrument became very popular, probably because of its appearance and its strong, sonorous contrabasses.

The basic tuning of all these instruments relates closely to the tuning of the guitar [low to high]: the tuning G-C-F-A-D-G for the alto lute; and E-A-D-F sharp-B-E for the lower tenor lute. The string-to-string intervals on both the lute and the guitar are characteristically fourths, interrupted in the upper range by a major third. Thus, a modern guitarist simply can tune down his third string a half tone and play Renaissance lute music. (The lute's tone and playing technique, of course, are different.) In the seventeenth century French lutenists, after decades of experimentation with additional strings and different tunings, gave rise to a new Baroque tuning [low to high]: C-D-E-F-G-A-D-F-A-D-F. This new, more elaborate tuning, with the addition of two more bass strings in the eighteenth century, remained the standard in central Europe until the lute was no longer played.

Construction

The soundboard of a lute is made of spruce thinned to about 1/16 inch (1.5 mm), and it is braced underneath by seven or more transverse bars. The modern classical guitar's soundboard, by comparison, is more than twice as thick and is braced by two transverse bars and several radial bars. The lute's soundboard design favors high overtones; the guitar's soundboard design favors the fundamental element of a plucked note. The lute's tone, consequently, is nasal and silver, while the guitar's tone is full and rich.

The proper location for a lute's bridge is near the end of its soundboard. The proper location for a guitar bridge, by contrast, is nearly at the midpoint of the soundboard. Here again, the lute design promotes overtones and a transparent sound. (Until the nineteenth century, the early guitar's soundboard design and bridge placement were quite similar to that of the lute.)

The lute's back—built even thinner than the top—historically was made of a large variety of woods. In the early sixteenth century such hardwoods as maple and ash were preferred; by 1600, yew—a softwood—was the favorite. Later makers reverted to the hardwoods, perhaps because of the unavailability of yew. Fancy instruments always were made of ebony, ivory, snakewood, and other exotic materials.

The lute's neck was made of poplar or willow, both of which are lightweight woods, and often were veneered with a hardwood like ebony. Fretboards on fine lutes were made of ebony. Frets were always simply gut string wrapped tightly around the neck. Some ancient instruments being reproduced today—like the cittern or bandora—typically have metal frets; but evidently the gut frets of the lute sounded better and lasted longer.

The lute pegbox was bent back at nearly a 90 degree angle to the neck. (However, the pegboxes of the theorbo and of the archlute—which resembles a small theorbo—were not.) Lutenists today frequently are asked why the neck is "bent." Although this feature has not been extensively analyzed, it is widely believed that a sharply angled pegbox returns string vibrations from the end of the neck back to the bridge, resulting in increased volume. A straight pegbox, by contrast, is more likely to absorb the strings' vibrations.

In the late Middle Ages, the European lute acquired double strings—the oud had been single-strung all along—and retained them, with some variations. Sometimes the top string, called the chantarelle (from the French verb chanter, "to sing"), was single. In the Baroque era the top two strings often were single. English lutenists like Dowland preferred all pairs strung in unison, but other artists strung the lower pairs in octaves.

Playing Techniques

Lutenists today are divided into two schools: those who play light, historically built lutes, and who use old playing techniques; and those who play heavy lutes, made like modern guitars, and use modern classical guitar techniques.

The lute revival began early in the twentieth century in Germany and England, and the new lutes that were made incorporated the thick dimensions and comparatively

high string tension of the classical guitar. Consequently these lutes sound much like guitars. The playing technique that works best on such instruments is the one developed for the modern guitar. The English guitarist Julian Bream is the most famous exponent of this school, and his prestige has given the modern playing styles some credibility. Konrad Ragossnig in Switzerland is the other prominent guitarist/lutenist who uses heavy instruments.

In the past fifteen years, however, two German lutenists—Michael Schaeffer and Eugen Dombois—have done extensive research into ancient techniques, and have applied their findings to their performances. Coupled with the increasing availability of light, historically built lutes, this movement has become the dominant one in America and most of Europe today.

There were actually many styles of lute playing in earlier times, and they can be divided into three major categories: Medieval, Renaissance, and post-Renaissance.

The medieval lute was a roundish, full-bodied instrument and was played with a quill or some other type of plectrum. The very small striking surface of the quill drew a bright response out of an otherwise somewhat tubby-sounding instrument, not unlike the sound of a large Neapolitan mandolin played with a pick. The plectrum style was adopted from the Arabs (the use of a plectrum on lutes and on pandouras is nearly 4000 years old), and was practiced in Europe until the late fifteenth century.

In the early Renaissance some lutenists began to play the lute with their bare fingers so that they could play more than one voice at once. The polyphonic style of musical compositions, whereby two or more voices of a piece move independently, became established in Europe in the late Middle Ages, and was the dominant style of the Renaissance. The Medieval lute technique was unsuited to polyphony, since the player could only produce one note at a time unless he strummed a chord. Thus the lutenist gradually abandoned the quill, but retained the general hand and arm position of the plectrum technique: the arms and fingers nearly parallel to the strings, and much of the striking impetus coming from slight rotations of the lower arm. This style is usually referred to today as the "thumb-under" style, since the thumb strikes under the index finger, into the hand. Its effect is a soft, round tone, since there is a large surface area that contacts the string, and the arm rotation promotes great speed.

When the style of lute playing changed in the years around 1475–1500, the lute had to change as well. The instrument was elongated and the bridge brought further down toward the base of the soundboard in order to make a bright tone that compensated for the essentially soft attack of the thumb-under technique. The German luthiers Laux Maler and Hans Frey, who lived and worked in Bologna, are the makers who are best known for this type of lute. One old source credits Maler with inventing the long, slender Renaissance lute, also noting that the thumb-under technique prevailed in Italy, Germany, France, and England, for about one hundred years.

In the mid-sixteenth century, luthiers began to make lutes that were less slender

and that were shallow in the body, rather than nearly half-round, as before. At this point yew became the preferred wood for backs. Magnus Tieffenbrucker of Venice and Vendelio Venere of Padua were two of the most famous makers of this type of lute. The new design—based on arithmetic and on geometric principles—and the soft yew wood resulted in a sound that was softer than that of the slender maple lutes of the early Renaissance. And so playing techniques had to change again.

Lutenists began to increase the angle of the right arm relative to the strings, so that the thumb was extended in front of the index finger and the fingers struck more nearly perpendicular to the strings. The reduced contact area of the fingers on the strings made for a brighter sound on an instrument whose tone had been balanced. Thumb-under and thumb-out techniques coexisted for some decades, but after 1600 the earlier technique was regarded as old-fashioned.

Today the two styles coexist again. Players like Paul O'Dette and James Tyler, who play mostly Renaissance music, use the thumb-under technique. Baroque lutenists tend to play thumb-out. Guitarist and plucked-string teacher Pat O'Brien of New York City plays guitar, baroque lute, and theorbo thumb-out, but switches to thumb-under for Renaissance lute. This is difficult to do, but O'Brien has proved that it is not impossible.

For aspiring players, builders, and lute scholars, the best source of information is the Lute Society of America (c/o Nancy Carlin, 1930 Cameron Court, Concord, CA 94518), which publishes four quarterly newsletters and an annual journal. The organization also sponsors summer workshops for luthiers and players at all levels of experience.

Fortune's Favorite: Kathleen Battle Is Keeping Options Open as She Fulfills Her Lyric Promise

by Heidi Waleson
Opera News
March 13, 1982

Kathleen Battle's career is taking off. One of James Levine's bright young people—American artists being carefully groomed for major roles at the Met and elsewhere—the Ohio-born soprano is nonetheless keeping a watchful eye on her own development and taking no chances with the glorious instrument that has so unexpectedly brought her fame. This Met season, her fourth, she's doing five roles, among them Despina in the new *Cosi Fan Tutte* and Rosina in the new *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, following Marilyn Horne. Add to this a clutch of lieder and orchestral concerts, and you get a pretty full spring calendar for a singer who hasn't been in the public eye all that long.

Critical accolades are rolling in for the pure, natural, high lyric voice, but Kathy Battle is keeping her head. In the neat, unpretentious living room with orderly rows of photographs on the grand piano and a breathtaking view of the icy Hudson, the diminutive proto-diva tucks her bare feet under her blue-jeaned behind and talks guardedly about where she's been and where she is. As to where she's going—well, she doesn't like to make predictions.

"I've always been practical," she says, pouring a cup of tea. "In high school I took typing and shorthand, so I could be a secretary if necessary." Youngest of seven children in a close-knit family, Kathy also studied piano and voice ("You know how people say 'You have a voice, you should study' "), but when it came time for college, only pressure from her high school music teacher convinced her to major in music, not math.

Even then, too practical to opt for a singing career, she chose music education. "I never would have dreamed of being a performance major. Still, I was feeling my way in college. I took art, dance, piano and languages. I kept promising myself I'd take more math. It gives me a comfortable feeling always to keep my options open."

Master's degree from the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory in hand, she applied for a position in an inner-city school, because "I wanted to teach black children." As a general music teacher, grades four through six, she found the work rewarding but ultimately draining. "Teachers shouldn't stay in a situation like that all their lives. They should switch subjects or schools. After a few years in the same circumstances you resign yourself to a certain level of enthusiasm—or lack of it. It creates problems, because the kids sense it."

As things turned out, Kathleen Battle spent only two years initiating children into the mysteries of Orff instruments and Kodály sight-singing. Performing in the

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classroom—an essential part of the teacher's bag of tricks, she asserts—had its limits. "I guess on a subconscious level I really wanted to be a singer. I was still studying voice, taking German in night school, doing oratorio and church jobs around the city, plus auditions."

One day she auditioned for Thomas Schippers, conductor of the Cincinnati Symphony and the Festival of Two Worlds in Spoleto. The next thing she knew, she was making her professional debut in Italy in the Brahms *German Requiem*, followed by a repeat performance with the Cincinnati Symphony in the fall. "I was still teaching, so about two hundred of my students came." She giggles. "I think they were all asleep. Then at the fifth movement they all started nudging each other"—she imitates the stage whispers of ten-year-olds—" 'Miss Battle's singing!' They all mobbed me in the greenroom afterward. It was great."

So much for teaching, though the soprano says she'd like to teach voice some day. The connection with Schippers brought an introduction to young James Levine, director of the Cincinnati May Festival, ever on the lookout for promising young singers. Levine quickly became "my friend, mentor, counselor"—his picture is prominent in the gallery on her piano—and the music teacher went back to school to pursue a new option. To her voice studies with Franklin Bens she added courses in opera interpretation, song literature and acting, plus the leads in two student productions directed by Italo Tajo, "unforgettable experiences."

Meanwhile, Levine was hiring her to sing in Cincinnati, Ravinia and all over the U.S., adding the Mozart C-minor Mass, *The Creation* and the Bach *Wedding Cantata* to her repertory, among others. Competitions began to bear fruit, and word got around, so when the producers of *Treemonisha*, Scott Joplin's opera playing on Broadway, needed a cover for the lead role, they offered Miss Battle the job. On her way to Europe to study, she changed her plans and moved to New York instead. "That was when my career began in earnest," she notes. It was 1975. Three years and several opera roles later, she made her Metropolitan Opera debut as the Shepherd in *Tannhäuser*, followed by Sophie in *Werther*. Engagements in Europe were quick to follow.

If this sounds like a swift and dizzying ascent to international status, Kathleen Battle is showing no signs of vertigo. Serene, she appeared at the first Music from Ravinia concert this season in a white, bouffant, puffed-sleeve, off-the-shoulder dress, hair pulled back tightly to show her wide cheekbones, and delivered Brahms, Schubert and Schumann with seasoned, expressive ease. In private she's anxious to create the right image but secure about the achievements that have given her the right to create one at all. "My career has followed a natural evolution," she says. "I started out more oriented toward the concert repertory, but now I have a good balance with opera, orchestral concerts and recitals."

This spectrum is vital, she feels, because singers in her voice category can easily become typed as soubrettes if they limit themselves to opera. The masses, oratorios,

symphonies and cantatas of Brahms, Haydn, Mahler, and Bach, as well as spirituals and the songs of Schubert and Duparc, are an important antidote to the Adinas, Despinas, Norinas, Zerlinas, and Rosinas that are the meat and drink of high lyric-coloratura voices. And if there's one thing Kathy Battle is sure about, it's singing what is suited to her. No excursions into heavier repertory, no unredeemable mistakes. "I won't stretch or pull my voice beyond its capacity and capability," she says firmly. "And I know what the limit is"—ingenuously—"after I've taken the poll. I get all the input [from Levine, her teacher Daniel Ferro, et al.] and then decide."

Mozart is her man in the opera world right now, his high lyric heroines and servants both vocally and temperamentally suitable. "I approach all my opera roles vocally," she says, "and Mozart is perfect. There's a clarity of line, a rhythmic thrust, a kind of rhythmic vitality that comes from within, and of course with the color and weight of the voice, he suits me. And his roles are a challenge. With the precise quality of the music, one has to express within those boundaries." Singing Pamina at the Met last fall was a special thrill, because it gave her the chance to be what most of her other roles don't, "a lyrical presence onstage. And that's me, really."

Despina, the scheming servant of two hapless ladies, is hardly a lyrical presence, and Kathy Battle spent a lot of time trying to stretch her imagination to encompass the part. "I approach acting naturally, and there's a coarseness, a vulgarity about Despina that isn't me." Rosina, on the other hand, like Susanna, is a bit closer to home. Battle doesn't seem worried about following Marilyn Horne in the role. "My Rosina will be different from hers, just because the voices are so different, and you find the colors of the character in the voice. It's exciting—my first real coloratura role at the Met." She's suddenly expansive. "I love Rosina. So beautiful, so feminine, with all those different colors. She's vivacious, impish and cunning—and daring, for example in the way she deals with Bartolo. Then toward the end, when she thinks she's been betrayed, there's real, heartfelt vulnerability." She thinks for a moment. "It's important to have that vulnerability, and you can find it in any character. Nothing is so clear-cut." This isn't Battle's first Rosina ("That's a blessing!")—she sang the role in school and for her professional opera debut with the Michigan Opera Theatre. Still, she went back to look at the Beaumarchais plays for character clues and studied the *Eighteenth-century Woman* exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum.

She does her homework. "In preparing an interpretation of a song or a character, I try to perform the piece as I would like to have heard it. I go to concerts a lot—instrumental and vocal—and get ideas. For example, I'm always amazed at piano recitals at how a basically percussive instrument can sound so mellifluous." She grins. "Then I'll sit down with a Beethoven sonata I've known for years and be amazed at how I'm not able to do it!"

The voice is a different matter, however. "I look at a line, and there's one way that

occurs to me a phrase should be shaped. I trust my instincts, and depending on the circumstances I remain flexible, but if my ideas are valid musically, the people I'm working with pick up on them. Communication with the audience comes from the words, from knowing what you're singing about." She stops for a moment. "No, that's not all. There are a lot of people who know what they're singing but don't reach out. There has to be a willingness to put away certain inhibitions. If the technique is there, and you know what you're singing, discarding those inhibitions is possible. It's a question of confidence, of letting performance nerves work for you instead of against you."

Kathy Battle will have plenty of opportunities to channel those performance nerves in seasons to come. London, Paris, Zurich, Vienna and San Francisco are all in the cards, as is her Salzburg debut as Despina this summer. She's guarded when talking about future plans in roles—"it's hard to predict" and in jobs—"I don't like to say until the contracts are signed." She does expect to be singing her "-ina" roles for the next few years at least, and next year she'll add Strauss—Zdenka in *Arabella*—a circumstance that gives her delight. "I love Strauss. He calls for that soaring line and purity, the shining tone on top. I've been working on Sophie [*Der Rosenkavalier*] for years."

A bit farther down the road? Battle gets even more careful. "Well, maybe Mélisande, Anne Truelove in *The Rake's Progress*, Handel operas. I don't really have a dream role." Pause. "I don't know if I should really say this, but there's a side of me that thinks it would be fun to do a crossover. I mean, I have a secret ambition to sing with Stevie Wonder."

Caution, translated into intelligent use of her gifts, has stood this young soprano in good stead so far. So have the support and advice of those who set her steadily evolving career on its path in the first place. With Levine, "The lines of communication were open from the very beginning. He encourages you, yet challenges you at the same time." She adds the late Maestro Schippers, her voice teachers and Jack Watkins, dean of the Cincinnati Conservatory, to the list of people who've made it all possible. "These people care. I've been so lucky to have the ones I've worked with, who gave advice and followed through with it. In the end we have to make decisions ourselves, but I don't take that kind of counseling lightly."

Caution, intelligence and good advice have been leavened with luck. "I like to read biographies of artists and how they surmounted obstacles. There were the ones who took the path of least resistance, and the ones who had to carve out every step." Undaunted, she admits she's the first kind. "I've been incredibly lucky," she says. What would have happened if Schippers hadn't hired her, if Levine hadn't taken up where Schippers left off? Practical Kathy Battle laughs. "I'd probably be working for IBM!"

Electronic Music: Where Does It Stand Today?

by Jean Eichelberger Ivey
Pan Pipes of Sigma Alpha Iota
Winter 1982

Once, electronic music was the esoteric domain of a few specialists, composers and researchers pioneering in the new. Their work, described in obscure technical journals or presented in rare and austere concerts where the only performers were loudspeakers, was barely known outside the restricted circle of innovators like themselves. Electrical devices to produce music date back at least as far as the nineteenth century, and the field received a major impetus when the process of tape recording became widespread after World War II. Yet as late as the 1960s, when I began to give lecture demonstrations on electronic music and teach classes in it at Peabody Conservatory, I found that the term itself was basically unfamiliar not only to the general public but even to the vast majority of professional musicians. "Electronic music! What in the world is that?" was a typical reaction.

But by the end of that very decade, a number of events were converging to bring awareness of the new medium to a large public. One record, *Switched-On Bach*, became a best seller. One magazine received by nearly every school music teacher in the United States, the *Music Educators Journal*, published a special issue devoted to electronic music. Popular groups like the Beatles more and more incorporated electronic effects into their recordings and live performances. Manufacturers of electronic music equipment (as we used to call it before the somewhat inappropriate term "synthesizer" became popular) sensed a growing market and began to cater to it with smaller, cheaper, more standardized units and plenty of advertising. Whereas the electronic music studio had once been a rarity found only in the largest of universities, something with the same name—no matter how inadequately equipped—became commonplace even in high schools and grade schools in the 70's.

And where is electronic music today? Almost everywhere. In the musical backgrounds of films and television dramas, not just to create the bizarre sounds we associate with science fiction but often when we think at first we are hearing a jazz combo or sounds of the primeval forest; in commercials; in those interludes in recorded announcements on the telephone; in so much of the musical wallpaper that surrounds us every day in banks and elevators, on trains and planes. Much of this is synthesized sound. Much of it is simplistic and uninteresting, and indeed is not designed to be heard except as background or filler.

But also, as in its early days, electronic music is in the hands of some innovative composers—only now the much greater

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Dr. Ivey is a member of the Peabody Conservatory's composition faculty and director of the electronic music studio. © 1982 by *Pan Pipes of Sigma Alpha Iota*. All rights reserved. Used with permission.

availability of the resources has created a far wider pool of these. School children can now experiment with tape recorders as a compositional tool, as school children can begin lessons on the violin or piano, and in any of these areas they can perfect their skills over years of experience. Electronic music need not be dull or confined to a narrow repertoire of bizarre effects, any more than the violin must squeak and scratch, or the piano be limited to five-finger exercises. In the hands of its best practitioners, electronic music can be rich, imaginative, subtle, expressive of the full range of poetic and dramatic feeling.

Today electronic music is often in the concert hall, not so much on specialized programs but combined with other musical resources. Early fears that electronic music would make the live performer obsolete have proved unfounded. Early claims that electronic means could imitate any sound have turned out to be unrealistic. It appears that electronic means are most effective in creating sounds which are unlike those of traditional performers, and that natural acoustic instruments and singers can in turn produce sounds unlike any which can emerge from loudspeakers. Thus both together offer a richer world of sound than either alone. Electronic music can be compared to the development of a whole new family of instruments, comparable to strings, woodwinds, brass, percussion, supplementing but not displacing any of these.

A large literature has been created in which a tape prepared in an electronic music studio is combined with live performers singing or playing traditional instruments. A doctoral dissertation on *American Compositions for Piano and Tape-Recorded Sound,* completed in 1976 by Barbara English Maris, not only discusses seventy-six works in the category of main focus, but lists in appendices twenty-four such works by non-Americans as well as thirty-two for organ and tape and nine for harpsichord and tape, which came to light incidentally to the main research. Almost every instrument now has a literature with tape, often commissioned by soloists who found such works an attractive challenge. Works for ensembles up to full orchestra which include tape are also common.

The tape parts in such works cover a wide range both in role and content. Sometimes the tape functions like a concerto soloist, as in the early works for tape and orchestra written in collaboration by Otto Luening and Vladimir Ussachevsky. Often the tape is more like an equal partner in the ensemble. Occasionally, it is relatively incidental somewhat like the recorded bird sounds (which of course predate the use of tape as a recording medium in Respighi's *Pines of Rome*. The sounds on tape may be of purely electronic origin, the output of oscillators or computers; they may be any recorded natural sounds, perhaps greatly modified; or any combination of these. The tape may even contain the straight recorded sounds of the same instruments which also are playing live, as in Lukas Foss's *Echoi*. Such a case offers a direct comparison between the live and the recorded sound and suggests, perhaps, some kind of philosophic statement

about the relation between the two. (Works of this last type of course lose much of their point and effectiveness when heard, not in the concert hall, but on a recording.)

My own practice in works for live performers plus tape, of which I have composed quite a number, has been varied. In my *Testament of Eve*, premiered in 1976 by the Baltimore Symphony under Leon Fleisher, I wished to present the Garden of Eden story through a dialogue between Eve and Lucifer. It seemed to me that Lucifer should be neither a serpent, nor a live singer standing on stage in a dress suit. Tape made it possible to present him as an invisible spirit whose disembodied voice seems to emerge from the winds. This focussed attention on Eve sung by a live singer (the mezzo, Elaine Bonazzi, in the premiere) who emerges as the soloist in a monodrama. Her role as a unique human being and a representative of all the human race thus received appropriate symbolic emphasis.

My piece *Sea-Change* for orchestra and tape, like *Testament of Eve*, is scheduled for premiere by the Baltimore Symphony March 3–4, 1982, conducted by Joseph Silverstein. This piece uses no actual voices or text, but it relates to Shakespeare's *Tempest*. (Much of my music has literary associations.) Here the tape part is designed to suggest the sounds of Shakespeare's magic isle: wordless singing by fairy voices, raindrops, bird cries, chimes tolling under water—all purely electronic in origin. These interact with the orchestral sounds in a variety of ways, complementing or contrasting, proposing or answering.

The serious, well-equipped electronic music studio as found today in leading universities and music schools is a working laboratory for composition and a variety of research. Composition students learn here new ways of perceiving and conceptualizing sound which will enrich their imagination for all future work, even if they were never to complete an electronic piece. Indeed, many of the innovations of contemporary music for traditional means have come about through the influence of electronic music. As Foss wrote in an article which appeared in 1963 in the journal *Perspectives of New Music*,

> it is the advent of electronic music which sparked the performance renaissance. Electronic music showed up . . . the limitations of traditional tone production, the restrictions of a rhythm forever bound to meter and bar line, notation tied to a system of counting. Electronic music introduced untried possibilities, and in so doing presented a challenge, shocked live music out of its inertia, kindled in musicians the desire to prove that live music "can do it too."

As a now well-known example, consider Penderecki's *Threnody*, a work for string orchestra with no electronic component. The kinds of timbres elicited here, the gliding pitches, the widening and narrowing clusters, and the time relations oriented to seconds rather than meters—all suggest a world of sound almost inconceivable before the advent of similar things in electronic music.

An aspect of electronic music which is growing exponentially in importance is

computer-synthesized sound. When Max Mathews of Bell Telephone Laboratories proposed the original program of this kind in the 50's, the idea seemed full of potential but beset by practical difficulties. In particular the long delays (several weeks or more) which were then usual between the composer's programming of a piece and hearing the results in actual sound made the learning process difficult, and compared unfavorably with the ready access to sound which is such an attractive feature of the "traditional" electronic music studio. But by now, improvements in computer technology and the burgeoning world of smaller, less expensive computers have made it possible to approach "real-time" composition. And vast as were the possibilities which the first electronic music studios seemed to offer, the computer music studio offers infinitely more, especially in such directions as precision, control, the handling of complex structures, and clean, noise-free sound. Computers, besides generating sound as a kind of alternative to the traditional electronic music studio (now often called the analog studio in contrast to the digital world of computers), have many other musical applications including the power to control analog equipment. Hybrid facilities, combining the analog and the digital, are common and useful.

At Peabody Conservatory, for instance, we have an excellent analog studio which I founded in 1969. In 1977, Peabody became affiliated with the Johns Hopkins University, a change which opened up many new resources. Utilizing the computers, technology and expertise available at Hopkins, we have been able to expand into the field of computer music. We have also received generous help and advice from the number of other institutions and individuals already active in this field. At present our students can work with programs in computer music already developed at Stanford and Colgate Universities and at IRCAM in Paris. Compositional projects which draw on both computers and the analog studio are common, and the students themselves are quick to discover more and more applications of the joint facilities. The exchange with Hopkins has not been entirely a one-way street. Hopkins students majoring in mathematics and the sciences have taken Peabody's electronic music courses, and Hopkins researchers in a variety of areas—physics, psychology, the study of speech and hearing, to cite a few—have expressed interest in our work. I anticipate that many fruitful collaborations may lie in the future. An electronic music studio besides being a resource for composers is a great research laboratory for the study of sound and sound perception.

One last point deserves mention in this incomplete overview. Electronic music, whether analog or digital, is not instant, automatic music. The equipment does not create the piece any more than the colors on an artist's palette create the painting. It is the composer who must listen, experiment, make judgments and choices. As with any artistic medium, electronic music has its own aesthetic problems. One of them may be the danger of accepting too easily the first results from machines, of settling for clichés and gimmicks. The principles whereby we evaluate any musi-

cal composition serve no less for electronic music—such as the power to engage attention, to evoke feelings, to call forth anticipation, surprise, and recognition, to delight the mind by coherence of design and the ear by sheer beauty of sound. The most indispensable "equipment" in composing electronic music is still the composer's imagination, taste, and talent.

Studies of Music in the Twentieth Century

by William W. Austin
The Journal of Musicology
January 1982

How do musicologists cope with music of the twentieth century? As variously as composers, performers, and listeners do. That is, I believe, not so variously as the millions of scholars, authors, and readers cope with the Babel of world literature of the twentieth century, but more variously than the smaller numbers of scholars, choreographers, dancers, and fans cope with the exciting rise of contemporary dance. If music itself is a sister to poetry and dance, musicology may be an in-law, keeping up her late-nineteenth-century alliance with art history, while ogling at anthropology and sociology, and studiously renewing her ancient family roots in music theory.

Literary scholarship prospers today on polemics among competing schools of criticism, sometimes to the point of neglecting poets and usurping their appeal to common readers. Musicology, still a slender thing in proportion to the blowsy amplitude of song and dance, encourages most musicologists to concentrate on some chronologically continuous part of the thousand-year European library of scores. Their work coheres and progresses. It presupposes a consensus about some values, and shuns discussion of most values. Typically, it refines texts and interprets them historically. Thus it resembles nineteenth-century philology more nearly than late twentieth-century semiotics or deconstruction. Of course musicologists reflect and participate in some twentieth-century trends, but the coherence and gratifying progress of their philological work do not extend to much collective treatment of new music. Rather, individual musicologists interested in new music have to seek their own paths individually. Some musicologists whose interest is only sporadic or only lip-service may seem to console themselves with kinds of journalism about new music that they would scorn in relation to any period from Guido to Wagner. Yet a hope of some scholarly consensus about Stravinsky, Cage, and the rest is still alive.

In this situation, perhaps my best response to Musicology's request for a thousand words or so is frankly to discuss my own fluctuating hope. *Music in the 20th Century* (1966) was addressed to "anyone interested in the music of Schoenberg, Bartók, and Stravinsky." Readers might like, I said, "to partake in a growing consensus affirming their importance." I hoped that this consensus would soon extend to jazz, though my editors doubted this. I was more confident that the consensus would soon extend to Debussy. Did I persuade Professor Lang? I emphasized that Debussy sought a broad audience only with reservations: he could not compete with Strauss, Puccini, or Lehar, nor did he wish to; he could not yet com-

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pete with Mozart. About Mozart's audience and its ways of listening, I noted that all of us were very ignorant, but all could observe some twentieth-century changes. I thought it worthwhile to relate the consensus on Stravinsky, Bartók, and Schoenberg to that on the classics, but I adhered to Debussy's thought that "classic" was an inappropriate label for contemporaries.

The New Grove (1970–80) can be cited in a crude way as confirming my assertion, my hope, and my trust. In number of pages per entry, Stravinsky, Bartók, Schoenberg, and Debussy rank here above Strauss. Jazz is almost catching up. Of course *Grove* contains ample evidence for questioning any consensus, but Table 1 includes several interesting bits of confirmation.

Table 1: Prominent 20th-Century Composers in *The New Grove*

Pages in Grove	Composers Born Around: 1860	1875	1885	1895	1905	1915	1925
27			Bartók				
26	Mahler		Stravinsky				
23		Schoenberg					
22	Debussy						
21	Strauss						
18			jazz				
16	Elgar						
	Janáček						
15		Ives				Britten	
14			Berg	Hindemith			
13				Prokofiev			
12	Fauré	Ravel	Webern				
11		Vaughan Williams		Weill	Shostakovich		
10	Puccini						
	Sibelius						
9		Rachmaninov			Tippett		
8			Kodály				Boulez
							Stockhausen
7		Holst		Copland			Henze
6	Delius	Reger	Malipiero	Poulenc	Messiaen	Cage	
	Nielsen						
5	Satie	Skryabin	Grainger	Eisler	Carter		Berio
			Szymanowski		Dallapiccola		
			Varese	Walton			

While my first book was in press, I wrote three articles that remain unpublished. One on Charlie Christian was written for a Festschrift that never found a publisher. One on Stockhausen was meant for *The Musical Quarterly*, one on Frank Martin, more analytical, was offered to *Perspectives of New Music*, but their editors had their own reasons for rejecting these. I mention these articles for two reasons: to indicate my specialized efforts in relation to the consensus, and to console, if I can, younger rejected authors.

With some hesitation, I accepted the invitation of Professor Friedrich Blume to write on "Neue Musik" for the supplement to *Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart* and for a paperback *Epochen der Musikgeschichte* (1974), reprinting Blume's and Besseler's important articles on earlier periods. My article, addressed to anyone seeking perspective on the "Neue Musik" slogan, reflected some changing estimates. Here Cage, Boulez, and Stockhausen won proportionately more of my attention than in *Music in the 20th Century*, though I still disclaimed adequate knowledge to treat them as I could Schoenberg, Bartók, and Stravinsky. Rock took a small place alongside jazz. Debussy got less attention now, though I was and am and will be—in a moment—increasingly concerned with him. Berg and Webern shared prominence with Schoenberg, Bartók, and Stravinsky. Schoenberg represented "new harmonies," Stravinsky "new rhythms," Webern "new melodies, structures, and processes," and Berg and Bartók "new social groupings." These headings did not confine any composer to discussion under a single heading, but showed my continuing preference for naming composers rather than "isms." The up-grading of Berg and Webern, incidentally, did not mean giving Hindemith or Prokofiev much less space than I had done before; rather it reflected my sense that any agreement about Schoenberg, Bartók, Stravinsky, Berg, and Webern is a fragile one, more academic than most professors acknowledge. Even jazz may be more an academic concern than it was before the triumphs of rock. And Debussy?

"New Music" shows up in the next-to-last chapter of *"Susanna," "Jeanie,"* and *"the old folks"* (1975), which is a study in cultural history, addressed to "anyone striving to clarify" meanings of such terms as Black, American, folk, popular, art, poetry, and music. The "New Music" chapter dwells on Ives, then surveys dozens of more recent composers, with some emphasis on Aaron Copland, Lukas Foss, and Thea Musgrave. The final chapter dwells chiefly on Ray Charles, with only Pete Seeger prominent among dozens of other "new singers and songwriters." Throughout this book, while "clarification" is more important than any possible consensus, there are references to hopes. Thus, "For Foss and Musgrave, unlike Ives or Copland or Thoreau, the hope of a 'universal language' is attenuated, if it survives at all." And for Ray Charles, in his own words, "I don't care what they done to my songs, but see the main thing, mama, what they tryin' to do to me. . . . But oh, I'm gonna keep on workin' on the buildin' just like you taught me, mama." Readers might join me in hoping that our songs and our scholarship

could contribute to a collective enterprise like Charles' "buildin' " if we would remember the "main thing" and take lightly our possible, improbable special contributions. Clarification within one realm does sometimes remove obstacles to our collaborating in whatever other realm we choose together.

"Consensus" is a worn-out word. If I had been more alert to its accretions of meaning from the 1950s, I should have seized on the different metaphor that was gaining currency in the sixties: "network." When we abandon "consensus," we do not necessarily cast ourselves adrift individually in the rough seas of impersonal society. We are connected, by many networks, with a few neighbors and with uncounted individuals all over the globe. Musicology, like literary scholarship, is such a network. Within its loose, far-flung, and shifting expanses, there are many smaller, more tightly woven networks. Which of these are the most fragile we do not know. Which are tough enough to survive storms and tidal waves we may sooner or later learn.

The music of Debussy seems to me so strong that the network of its friends could survive and stretch even if the networks of Joyce and Kafka, or Schoenberg, Bartók, and Stravinsky, and jazz were shredded. For some young composers today, as well as most performers and listeners, Schoenberg, Bartók, and Stravinsky are all too academic, too much associated with schoolrooms. The whole European heritage of skills and tastes can be represented by Machaut, Berlioz, Ives, and Debussy, or by almost any sort of personal choice from among its hundreds of masters. At the same time, non-European musics loom. More and more composers—Cage, Boulez, and Stockhausen among them—are learning to study something from India or Indonesia or Africa as deeply as Debussy studied the little he could hear. More and more young musicologists, I think, will be tracing connections between Debussy and young composers, connections that may skip over Schoenberg and Stravinsky, while incorporating some extra-European link. Though such scholars seek no new consensus, much less a patched-up old one, they may be "workin' on the buildin' " of a global music and musicology.

Leopold Stokowski Centenary Tribute: A Life of Conviction, Controversy, and Courage

by Paul Turok
Ovation
April 1982

Leopold Stokowski, interpretive Romantic, technological modernist, public relations realist, persistent advocate of new music, supreme orchestra builder and unique conductor, was born one hundred years ago this month.

His career was fated to be controversial; by virtue of his appointment as conductor of the Cincinnati Symphony in 1909, the London-born Stokowski became one of the very first to challenge the iron grip of German conductors on American orchestras, and in a sense, a conservative segment of American musical opinion has never forgiven him for this. Certainly he was roundly excoriated for excesses tolerated, or at worst, gently deplored when indulged in by his Continental contemporaries. For instance, as a born exhibitionist, he couldn't resist the "experiment" of having a spotlight focused on his head and hands to the exclusion of all other light. Yet, the difference between his "white mane" and Furtwaengler's "white gloves" was one of degree, not of kind.

He was also criticized for tampering with the orchestration of music he conducted, but so did Mahler and Toscanini. His famous Bach transcriptions, which made many unfamiliar organ masterpieces available to symphony audiences, are no more tasteless or inappropriate than similar ones by Elgar or Respighi, nor as clumsy as those of Schoenberg, not to mention the farrago of a "Bach Suite" concocted by Mahler! A discussion of the merits of such activities is beside the point, which is that Stokowski was very much a man of his time, and that to attack him for behavior excused in his colleagues is simply unfair. Surely as many brilliant performances occurred under his baton throughout his long career as under those of his rivals.

Central to this fascinating career was his twenty-six-year tenure as head of the Philadelphia Orchestra (1912–1938), in the course of which he developed it into one of the world's finest orchestras. (Although his departure from Cincinnati was attended by the first of many departure controversies, contemporary opinion left no doubt that during his short stay he built that orchestra into a first-class ensemble as well.)

Around a small core of excellent musicians, he gradually replaced the orchestra's personnel, while developing an orchestral sound at once bright and vibrant, incredibly sustained, but never so lush that it couldn't be credibly thinned out whenever the musical context demanded it. This sonic ideal was formed in the man's imagination, since he proved in his later career that he could

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impart it in some degree to every orchestra he conducted!

By 1916, he was ready to put his orchestra "on the map." With a typically shrewd appreciation of what would attract widespread attention, and as typical a concern for music seriously deserving of such attention, he gave the American premiere of Mahler's enormous Eighth Symphony, within four years of its only two other previous performances. During the same season, he gave the first American performance of the same composer's *Das Lied von der Erde*, and also recent works by Schoenberg, Scriabin and Strauss, thereby generating an antagonism in the conservative Philadelphia audience that eventually had much to do with his leaving the orchestra. Stokowski never compromised in two areas over which he felt entitled to control: programing, and audience behavior, about which he fought a valiant but ultimately stalemated battle.

Subsequent seasons saw world premieres of Rachmaninoff's Third Symphony, Fourth Piano Concerto and *Rhapsody on a Theme by Paganini*, Schoenberg's Violin Concerto, Copland's *Dance Symphony*, and Varese's *Ameriques* and *Arcana*, as well as first American performances of *The Rite of Spring* and *Gurrelieder* (among other works by Stravinsky and Schoenberg), Berg's *Wozzeck*, Falla's *El Amor brujo*, and symphonies by Miaskovsky, Shostakovich, Szymanowski, and Sibelius. With the exception of native-born Copland, along with Rachmaninoff and Varese (who by that time were living in the United States), music by American composers is noticeably missing from the (incomplete) list. Although the few other Americans whose music was premiered in Philadelphia during the Stokowski years were not as distinguished as some who came later, it must be admitted that Stokowski's sense of the "attention-attracting event" may well have precluded, in his mind, the uphill battle necessary to get audiences of that time interested in American music.

Stokowski's interest in new music is one facet of the restless intelligence that led him to lend his and his orchestra's prestige willingly to experiments with the latest technological developments in sound reproduction and transmission: among the pioneers, they made their first recording in 1917 and played for the country's first commercial orchestral broadcast in 1929. Stokowski also experimented with reseating the various orchestral sections, seeking different balances and blends of color. While frowned upon at the time, such reseatings have since become commonplace in recording studios. As always with Stokowski, beneath the showmanship, the almost childish delight in attracting attention to himself, lay a great seriousness of purpose.

Despite the various experiments, the major impression of his many years of Philadelphia performances is one of steady, high-quality music-making with plenty of "bread-and-butter" repertoire. Stokowski's interpretive instincts seemed rooted in the late nineteenth-century style of conducting with which he grew up. He didn't invent expressive distortion, over-emphasized ritardandos or the like; he merely prolonged them into an era when interpretive

values had veered off in a different direction. Often, in music of the Classical period, the results were unconvincingly arbitrary, although in monumental works like Beethoven's Ninth Symphony he could bring off performances of immense scope and intensity. Later nineteenth-century music generally fared brilliantly at his hands, with lucid Brahms and pellucid Wagner performances a particular specialty.

Because of his willingness to record, much of his work with the Philadelphia may still be heard. Most of the original 78 rpm's are now rare collectors' items, but from time to time RCA has released LP versions of some of these magnificently played recordings, and Bell Labs is slowly making available (to libraries and colleges) experimental recordings of amazingly high fidelity (including some in genuine stereo) from the early 1930s. No full assessment of Stokowski's great achievement as a conductor can be made without hearing as many of these discs as possible.

His last years in Philadelphia coincided with his zenith as a public personality. Having already appeared in two Hollywood movies *(Big Broadcast of 1937* and *100 Men and a Girl),* he collaborated with Walt Disney in *Fantasia* which, despite the hash made out of several compositions (particularly, *The Rite of Spring)* and questionable visual images (pink-aproned hippos floating in the air to Beethoven's *Pastorale),* is still the outstanding example of its genre. Stokowski's announcement that "deeplying differences" between the board of directors and himself were causing him to resign as conductor of the Philadelphia was tactful enough. However, it took until 1960 for feelings on both sides to simmer down enough so that he could return to the orchestra as a guest conductor. The interim was interesting, to say the least.

Although Eugene Ormandy formally took over in 1938, Stokowski's final commitments to the Philadelphia ran until 1941. By that time, he had formed the All-American Youth Orchestra and taken them on cross-country and Latin American tours, but they were forced to disband in 1942. He then became co-director of the NBC Symphony along with Arturo Toscanini, for whom it had been formed. No two musicians could differ more in approach, and Stokowski quite predictably had to leave after one year. Incidentally, after Toscanini's retirement in 1954, the NBC Symphony tried to go it alone, as the Symphony of the Air. They invited Stokowski to reestablish his connection with them, which resulted in several fine recordings.

In 1944, he helped organize the New York City Center, but soon severed his connection with them. In 1949 he was appointed co-director of the New York Philharmonic, along with Dimitri Mitropoulos, who retained the position alone when Stokowski was dropped soon after. In reviewing his career, the impression is inescapable that Stokowski's courage in refusing to relinquish any aspect of his artistic control to Philadelphia's board of directors subsequently caused boards of other orchestras to be suspicious of him. The fact remains that, after leaving Philadelphia, he never again was offered the sole directorship of a world-class ensemble.

In 1955, he accepted the directorship of the Houston Symphony, whose playing soon improved appreciably. With them he made a recording of Shostakovich's Eleventh Symphony (for Capitol) that still stands up as a sonic showcase. During those years, he also recorded with a marvelous New York pick-up group, billed as "his" orchestra. These discs were notable not only for the generally excellent performances, but for very imaginative miking, in which he certainly had a hand. After leaving Houston in 1960, his return as a guest conductor to Philadelphia was a triumph of art and nostalgia.

Then, nearing 80, Stokowski embarked on a project that lent as much glory to his name as his work with the Philadelphia, albeit in the more mature, less flamboyant manner of his post-Philadelphia years. He founded the American Symphony, based on a revolving pool of excellent young players from the New York area, and funded several years' worth of concerts with them out of his own pocket. By 1965, he was ready to put them "on the map." With the same shrewd appreciation of what would attract attention and at the same time be musically valuable that had served him so well a half-century before, he presented the world premiere of Charles Ives' Fourth Symphony, following it up soon after with the work's first recording. Since then, other conductors' readings have appeared on disc, some clearer texturally or better played, but none stronger or more exciting. He remained with the orchestra until 1972 when, after a grand celebration of his ninetieth birthday at the Plaza Hotel, he left the United States to re-settle in London.

Not, of course, for retirement. Until his death five years later, he concertized and recorded constantly, retaining his enthusiasm for new music right to the end. (There is something touching about his learning and performing Havergal Brian's newly written symphony when both composer and conductor were 93.) Clearly, the man was indomitable.

Often lost sight of is Stokowski's great strength of character: his willingness to risk (and often lose) his position for the sake of what he believed in strongly. His strong convictions about new music have already been discussed, along with their consequences. In the 1920s, he became involved with an excellent symphonic band (the "Band of Gold"), finding the unusual sonic possibilities and, perhaps, the prospect of reaching an even larger audience worth risking the disapproval of his more sedate admirers. In 1934, long before such a gesture was universally popular, he led a huge orchestra assembled at Yankee Stadium in a benefit for Jewish refugees from Hitler's Germany. In 1960, his courageous refusal to countenance racism on the stage at Houston was the direct cause of his leaving that orchestra. (He was protesting management's refusal to permit a black college choir to appear with white singers in a performance of *Gurrelieder*.) Also generally unknown is his often exquisite kindness to young, aspiring musicians.

Having been granted ninety-five years of incredible activity, it's a pity he didn't live five more; the hall had already been booked in London, and celebrating his

centenary by conducting to a packed house would have so typified the man. As it is, the Stokowski legacy is at once moving and inspiring. As the characteristics of his worldly vanity fade with time, there remains the memory of a man totally, brilliantly devoted to music.

Stokowski's Recordings—Some Favorites

The following personal favorites were chosen from the many Stokowski recordings that are currently in print, listed here in roughly chronological order.

RCA occasionally re-releases performances from the first Philadelphia period. Thumbing through the Schwann II catalog is often the best way to see what's available from this period at any given time. Some fascinating material from this era is also available (on LP's) through the Leopold Stokowski Society, two of whose offerings are: *The Early Years,* a compilation of short pieces recorded by Stokowski and the Philadelphia between 1917 and 1924 (including their first recording together, Brahms' *Hungarian Dance* No. 5), and the legendary 1927 Brahms First Symphony. Other discs available from this source include highlights from *Boris Godounov* with the San Francisco Symphony and Chorus, and a 1962 Philadelphia Orchestra concert featuring Webern's *Passacaglia,* Sibelius' Fourth Symphony, and Stokowski's own orchestration of Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition.* (For information contact: Sylvan Levin, American Representative, Leopold Stokowski Society, 7 East 78th Street, New York, NY 10021.)

Later, with the Symphony of the Air, Stokowski produced a particularly glowing Wagner concert (RCA AGL 1-1336), along with what is still the preferred performance of Virgil Thomson's suites from *The Plow That Broke the Plains* and *The River* (Vanguard VRS 2095) and a typically Stokowskian Brahms Serenade No. 1 (Varese Sarabande 8150).

The excellent Shostakovich Eleventh Symphony with the Houston Symphony on Seraphim (S 60228) has sound inferior to the original Capitol pressings, but is available here as a single disc instead of a two-record set. His triumphant return to Philadelphia is commemorated by intense readings of his symphonic synthesis from Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde,* along with Falla's *El Amor brujo,* in which he introduced the young Shirley Verrett (Odyssey Y 32368).

Recordings with "his" orchestra include the only recording of Loeffler's *Pagan Poem,* coupled with Schoenberg's *Transfigured Night* (Seraphim S 60080). With the "RCA Symphony," another pick-up group, perhaps not as hand-picked by the conductor himself, there is a vibrant "rhapsodies" disc featuring music by Enesco, Liszt and Smetana (RCA AGL 1-3880).

Happily, the epochal Ives Fourth Symphony with the American Symphony is still available (CBS MS-6775). Also of interest with that orchestra are recordings of the Tchaikovsky Fourth Symphony (Vanguard 10095) and a somewhat eccentric Beethoven Fifth Piano Concerto with Glenn Gould as soloist (CBS MS-6888).

From the final London period, the fol-

lowing are particularly exciting: with the London Symphony, a program of his Bach arrangements (RCA AGL 1-3656) and Tchaikovsky's *Francesca da Rimini* and *Serenade for Strings* (Philips 6500 921); with the Royal Philharmonic, Tchaikovsky's *1812 Overture* and Dvorak's Serenade with other music for strings (Desmar 1011G); and with the National Philharmonic, Brahm's Second Symphony (CBS M 35129), Sibelius's First Symphony (CBS M 34548) and Rachmaninoff's Third Symphony (Desmar 1007G).

Features

Braille Music Forum: The Tie

by Bettye Krolick

Tie signs in braille music may seem straightforward, but there are some things old and some things new that you should know to become better readers. Usually there are but two signs: (1) dots 4, 1-4, indicating the tie of a single note, and (2) dots 4-6, 1-4, indicating that two or more notes of a chord are tied to the next chord. Reading problems occurring in connection with these two signs are generally associated with changing in-accord parts or, in keyboard music, with changing hand parts. Other reading problems, however, occur with earlier versions of tie signs and with new signs found in music codes recently published in other countries. This article identifies potential reading problems, explains historical tie signs, introduces new versions of signs, and discusses the need for international study and cooperation to prevent further proliferation of braille tie signs.

Historical Background

Louis Braille first published his embossed code for music, *Procédé pour Ecrire les Paroles, la Musique et la Plain-Chant au Moyen de Points* (Paris: Institutions Royale des Jeunes Aveugles), in 1829. Braille's first code, which used dashes as well as dots, later was revised extensively by him. The revision, *A Key to the Braille Alphabet and Musical Notation* (London: British and Foreign Blind Association), which is the basis for our present braille music code, apparently was not published in complete form until 1871, although portions, including the single cell sign dots 1-4 for both tie and slur, appeared in earlier publications such as Gaudet's *Les Aveugles Musiciens* (Paris: Fain Thunot, 1846) and Robyn's *Thorough Description of the Braille System for the Reading and Writing of Music* (St. Louis: August Wiebusch & Son, 1867). At the first international meeting on embossed music, the Cologne Congress of 1888, Braille's music code, including the sign for slurs and ties, was accepted officially by the representatives, who included individuals from England, France, and Denmark. Pitches were the distinguishing factor: the sign between two notes or chords having the same pitch or pitches represented a tie; if the pitches were different, the sign then indicated a slur.

Before the next international meeting, the Paris Conference of 1929, a need for distinguishing between the signs was recognized by some braille music readers. In 1925 the publication *Key to Braille Music Notation* by L. W. Rodenberg (Louisville: American Printing House for the Blind) listed the following: slurs were noted with dots 1-4; ties of a single note or interval were noted with dots 4-5, 1-4, and the notes of a chord played one after the other and often notated by a slur used dots 4-6, 1-4. In other words, the sign we now use for an arpeggio meant a tie, and the sign we use for chord tie also meant arpeggio as well as chord tie.

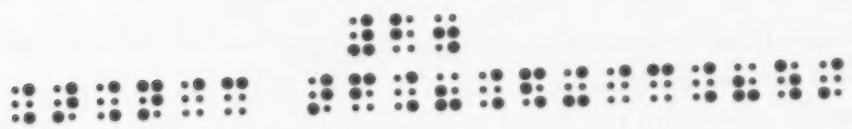
At the 1929 Paris Conference, the current signs (dots 4, 1-4 for tie; dots 4-6, 1-4 for chord tie; dots 4-5, 1-4 for arpeggio) were internationally accepted by the group and have, during the succeeding years, been incorporated into versions of the braille music code used throughout the world. However, the influence of Rodenberg was so strong in the United States, that some music transcribed in this country during the 1930s and even into the 1940s contains dots 4-5, 1-4 used as single-note ties and dots 4-6, 1-4 for arpeggios. Readers puzzled by tie signs that seem to disagree with the musical sense of the phrase should check the transcription to determine if it is pre-1950, and if so, proceed using good musical sense. By understanding the historic versions of tie signs, readers can make use of earlier transcriptions.

Reading Examples

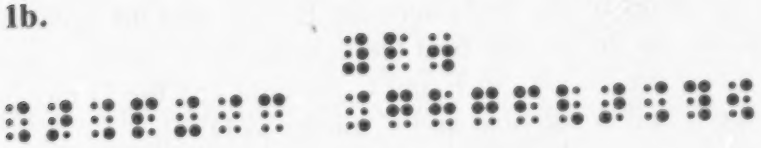
Since this article is published in large print and on cassette, as well as in braille, the length of the examples is limited and the notation is contrived, but the types of situations that may puzzle music readers are shown. To test your reading skill, look at or listen to the following five examples, containing potential tie problems, before reading the explanations. In these keyboard examples, right-hand parts read down and left-hand parts read up.

Example 1—Potential Tie Problems

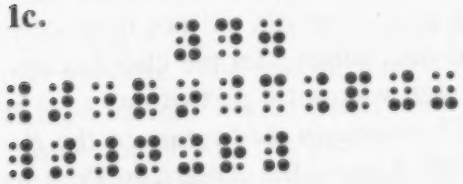
1a.



1b.

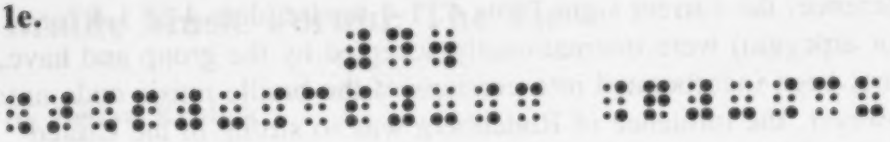


1c.



1d.

1e.



Example 1a illustrates a common situation where the tied note appears twice in the different forms, first as a note name and later as an interval sign. In the first measure, fifth octave C is tied. In the next measure the first chord contains another fifth octave C, this time written as the interval of a third below E. The interval sign is followed by the tie sign, so the C continues to be held, and in the next chord the C is the interval of a second below D.

Example 1b illustrates a tie that begins on an interval sign and ends after an in-accord sign in the next measure. The tied note is fifth octave C, a third below E. Since the tie sign has dots 4, 1-4, it is a single note and only the C is held. In the next measure, the fifth octave C, which is the first note of the second in-accord part, should be held rather than re-stated even though no tie sign appears at that point.

Example 1c illustrates the fact that a tie can begin in one hand part and continue in the other. The tied note in the first chord is fourth octave C, a fifth below G. The chord is held for two beats. The second chord in that measure contains fifth octave E-C-G, so the fourth octave C probably will not be held by the right hand. The left hand part, reading up, has third octave C-E for two beats. The second half-note chord consists of third octave G and a fourth above which is the tied, fourth octave C. Although there is no indication of a tie in the left-hand part, that pitch should be held over rather than re-stated.

Example 1d illustrates chord ties which indicate that two or more notes are tied. In this case the reader must examine the pitches in the chord to determine whether all or some of the notes are held. Reading down, the notes of the first chord are E-C-G, and the notes of the second chord are F-C-G. Therefore, on the second beat the E moves to F while C and G are held. The notes of the third chord are F-C-A, so F and C are held and the G moves to A. For the final chord (F-D-A) the F and A are held and C moves to D.

In example 1e, an examination of the chords reveals no common pitches, and the half note rest following the third "chord tie" affirms that the print symbols did not indicate ties at all. The symbols, which in print are identical to chord ties, mean "let the chords continue to ring or sound." This meaning for the chord-tie sign was not a part of any manual on braille music notation until the publication of the *1975 American Addendum* to the *Revised International Manual of Braille Music Notation 1956* (Louisville: American Printing House for the Blind, 1961).

American Decisions

In preparation for the *1975 American Addendum,* the Braille Authority of North America's

Advisory Committee on Braille Music Notation addressed two problems in regard to ties: (1) In print, the same signs that are used for ties and chord ties are also used to indicate that a note or chord should continue to sound. The committee decided that in braille, as in print, the reader should determine the meaning from the musical content; therefore, no new sign was devised for this purpose. (2) Is there a need for reminder ties in some instances? The *1975 American Addendum* states in Paragraph 60b that "In bar-over-bar or open score format, all ties are restated at the beginning of a new parallel and of a new page, as well as after a major interruption, such as a long parenthetical expression, light double bar, volta, etc. . . . In single line instrumental music, restatement is recommended at the beginning of a new section or segment. . . . These reminder ties precede all other signs, except marginal measure numbers, hand signs, clefs, and time or key signatures."

New Tie Signs

Recently published manuals from Denmark and Russia show ten variations of the two basic signs. In the *Ben Brailleski Nodeskrift, I, Grundregleir* (Copenhagen: State Library for the Blind, 1976), O. Kjer Nielsen introduces dots 1-4, 1 for tie and dots 1-4, 1-3 for chord ties to be used when the print tie sign is broken. In print, chords, which are noted vertically on the staff, can have a tie sign extending throughout a measure, an inch or more at times. A few publishers will break the arc of the tie, showing only its beginning and its ending. In braille, the reverse signs indicate that print feature. These and all of the other new signs are shown in Example 2.

The Danish manual also shows tie signs with prefixes forming three-cell signs as listed below. The prefix dots 4-5-6 indicate that the tie will move to another in-accord voice. The prefix dot 5 indicates that in keyboard music the tie will move to the part for the other hand (staff). These signs would be used in situations such as those illustrated in Examples 1b (changing in-accord) and 1c (changing hand part) above. In the 1978 Russian manual *Notnaya Sistema Braillya* (Moscow: Central Republic Library for the Blind, 1978), these same three-cell signs are listed; four-cell signs are then shown, formed by the addition of another prefix. The additional prefix, dots 4-6, indicates the ending of the special tie. If these three- and four-cell signs were used in Example 1c, the three-cell sign, dots 5, 4, 1-4, would replace the two-cell tie sign in the right-hand part, and in the left-hand part, the four-cell sign, dots 4-6, 5, 4, 1-4, would be inserted before the final character (fourth interval) of that measure. The use of dots 4-5-6 to indicate change of in-accord and dot 5 to indicate change of staff is consistent with other signs we use, and the Russian manual consistently shows dots 4-6 as the prefix for the ending of a sign. It should be remembered that in many European transcriptions, music is brailled in paragraphs rather than parallels. In keyboard music this causes the right and left hand parts to be physically separated on the page and may influence the need for specific signs.

Example 2—Tie Signs

Broken-line tie

Broken-line chord tie

Tie between staves

Chord tie between staves

End of tie between staves

End of chord tie between staves

Tie between in-accords

Chord tie between in-accords

End of tie between in-accords

End of chord tie between in-accords

International Considerations

After almost fifty years of international agreement on the standardization of braille signs for ties, chord ties, and arpeggios, do readers now need reminders or indications of beginnings and endings of ties that change staves or in-accords? Is more complex music presently being transcribed? Does twentieth-century music present a need for more detailed tie signs? Should signs be adopted internationally for broken-line ties? Which is better for the incomplete tie meaning "let it sound"—to devise a special sign (dots 5-6, 1-4) or to let readers determine the meaning from context?

These questions illustrate the problems that come about when a number of countries work independently on the braille music code. The publication of new braille music notation indicates a willingness to update and expand the code and demonstrates a healthy concern for meeting current transcription needs, but it also underscores a need for international cooperation to insure a level of consistency which will make braille music readable by musicians worldwide. In this regard, the current efforts of the World Council for the Welfare of the Blind to establish a subcommittee on braille music notation and to move toward an international conference are to be applauded.

Comments from readers are welcome on this and other topics. Send material to Bettye Krolick, 602 Ventura Road, Champaign, IL 61820.

New Music Materials

The following works are available on loan from the Music Section, National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, Library of Congress, Washington, DC 20542.

Press braille and most recorded materials may also be purchased from their respective producers. Large-print scores are available on loan only. These listings show, where possible, composer, title, print publisher, producer, and Music Section catalog number.

Materials in the music collection are available on two-month loan, renewable upon request.

Sources

HC. Handcopied braille; available only on loan from the Library of Congress.
NBT. Norges Blindeforbunds Trykkeri, Rosenkrantzgt. 3, 5000 Bergen, Norway
RNIB. Royal National Institute for the Blind, 224 Great Portland Street, London, W1N 6AA, England
SNB. Regione Toscana—Stamperia Braille, Istituto Nazionale dei Ciechi "Vittorio Emanuele II," Firenze 50131—Via Aurelio Nicolodi n. 2, Postale n. 5/1257, Italy
STBB. Statens Trykkeri og Bibliotek for Blinde, Rønnegade 1, 2100 København Ø, Denmark

Braille

Books about Music

Conducting, Choral

Lindeman, Trygve Henrik, 1896–
Laerebok i taktering for kor-dirigenter
BRM 26646
Text in Norwegian. H. Aschehoug. NBT

Hymns, Norwegian—Bibliography

Register til Landstads reviderte Salmebok
BRM 26558
Print publisher unidentified. NBT

Scores

Choral Music

Bach, Johann Sebastian, 1685–1750
Herz und Mund und Tat und Leben
Jesus bleibet meine Freude
BRM 26832
For SATB and piano or organ; text in Danish (Herre Gud, du er og bliver). Tonika. NBT

Belmont-hymne BRM 26774
arranged by Torbjørn Knutsen
For SATB; text in Norwegian. Norsk Musikforlag. NBT

Britten, Benjamin, 1913–1976
Flower songs
Ballad of green broom BRM 27120
For SATB; text in English. Boosey and Hawkes. RNIB 44229

Endsley, Chuck
The Lord's Prayer BRM 27023
For SATB and piano; text in English. Criswell Music Press. HC

James, John
Starlit stable BRM 27122
For unison voices and organ; text in English. Basil Ramsey. RNIB 44249

Starlit stable
Sweet by the song
When the herds go watching

Olsen, Sparre, 1903–
Fjell-Norig BRM 26667
For SATB; text in Norwegian. Norsk Musikforlag. NBT

Sandvold, Arild
Herre, sign du disse kjaere (Brudesalme) BRM 26545
For SATB; text in Norwegian. Norsk Musikforlag. NBT

Steenberg, Per, 1870–1947
Korsanger for gudstjenesten BRM 26700
For SATB; text in Norwegian. Norsk Notestik. NBT

To Sanger for Mannskor fra Sang-Album BRM 26697
compiled by Rikard Nordraak
For TTBB; text in Norwegian. Norsk Musikforlag. NBT

Brede seil over Nordsjø går (Trygvason)
Der ligger et land mod den evige sne

Electronic Organ Music

Erstes Spiel auf der elektronisches Orgel BRM 26878
arranged by Willi Nagel
Sikorski. STBB

Includes: Oh Susanna, The yellow rose of Texas, Red River valley, He's got the whole world in His hands, and Danny boy

Harpsichord Music

Leichte Klaviermusik des Barock BRM 27018
edited by Fritz Emonts
Schott. HC

Includes: Gigue (Bach), Saraband (Corelli), Les coucous bénévoles (Couperin), and Rigaudon (Telemann)

Horn Music

Dukas, Paul, 1865–1935
Villanelle BRM 27006
Piano acc. International Music. HC

Organ Music

Den støre hvite fløk (Norwegian folksong) BRM 26656
arranged by Eyvind Alnaes
Norsk Musikforlag. NBT

Kåsin, Trygve
To orgelstykker BRM 26787
Print publisher unidentified. NBT

Fugue, G major
Fugue, E flat major

Kvandal, Johan
Meditasjon for fastetiden BRM 26600
Norsk Musikforlag. NBT

Møseng, Sigvart
13 Koralforspill i samsvar med *Koralbok*

for den Norske Kirke BRM 26777
Norsk Musikforlag. NBT

Contains 13 choral preludes corresponding to chorales in the *Koralbok for den Norske Kirke*

Nielsen, Ludvig
Orgelkoraler BRM 26590
Norsk Musikforlag. NBT

Sandvold, Arild
Seks improvisationer over Norske folketoner fra den *Nye Koralbok*, op. 5. BRM 26613
Norsk Musikforlag. NBT

Steenberg, Per, 1870–1947
Bryllupsmarsch BRM 26706
Norsk Musikforlag. NBT

Fedrelandshymne BRM 26703
Norsk Notestik et Forlag. NBT
Prelude and fugue based on Norwegian national anthem, "Ja, vi elsker dette landet"

Wagner, Richard, 1813–1883
Lohengrin
Treulich geführt (Brudekor) BRM 26706
Norsk Musikforlag. NBT

Piano Methods, Studies, and Exercises

Alnaes, Eyvind, 1872–1932, and **Mary Barratt Due**
Norsk Pianoskole BRM 26554
Norwegian text. Norsk Musikforlag. NBT

Bartók, Béla, 1881–1945, and **Sándor Reschofsky**
Klaverskole BRM 26811
Danish text. Engstrøm og Sødring. NBT

Köhler, Louis, 1820–1886
Praktisk pianoskole BRM 26765
Norwegian text. Print publisher unidentified. NBT

Piano Music

Backer-Grøndahl, Agathe, 1847–1907
Fantasistykker, op. 36, hefte 1 BRM 26549
Norsk Musikforlag. NBT

Pianoalbum BRM 26637
Norsk Musikforlag. NBT

Berømte Temaer BRM 26632
arranged by Harry Egediussen
Presto Forlag. NBT

Collection of well-known themes from works by Beethoven, Smetana, Brahms, Chopin, Liszt, and Tchaikovsky

Cooke, Arnold
Suite in C BRM 27121
Oxford University Press. RNIB 44210

Corelli, Arcangelo, 1653–1713
24 preludes, vol. 1 BRM 27014
Belwin Mills. HC

Diamond, David, 1915–
Alone at the piano, book 2 BRM 27017
Southern Music. HC

Early Italian piano music of the seventeenth century BRM 26990
compiled by Brian Shaw
J. Fischer. HC

George, Jon
Kaleidoscope solos, book 1 BRM 27020
Alfred Publishing. HC

Kaleidoscope solos, book 2 BRM 26486
Alfred Publishing. HC

Haydn, Joseph, 1732–1809
Sonata, H. XVI, 45, E flat major
BRM 27258
Peters. RNIB 44824

Joplin, Scott, 1868–1917
The entertainer: a rag-time two-step
BRM 27108
With chord symbols. C. Hansen. HC

Kraehenbuehl, David
Jazz and blues, books 5–6 BRM 27012
Summy-Birchard. HC

Krentzlin, Richard, 1864–1956
Vår egen musik, op. 155 BRM 26557
E. Anderssons Musikförlag. NBT

Melling, Einar
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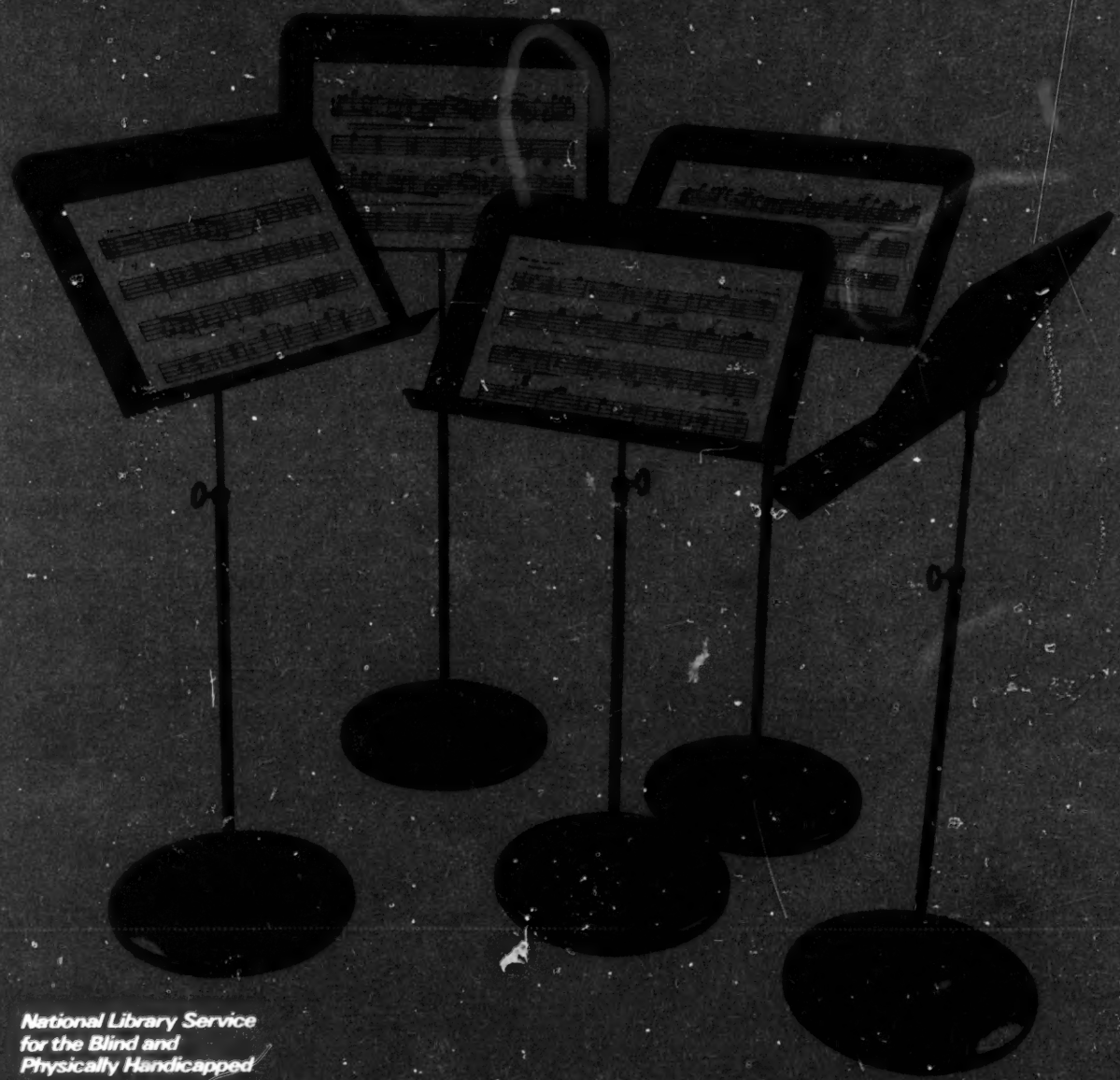
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Selected Reprints

Music in America, 1981

Excerpted from Musical America, 1982 International Directory of the Performing Arts
1982

One question dominated the musical community in 1981: How well would the arts survive the severe financial cutbacks recommended by the Reagan administration? When the White House announced a proposed 50 percent reduction of funds for the National Endowment for the Arts, and suggested the possible dismantling of the NEA in favor of a public corporation for the arts, there was dismay among many music presentors, who predicted that the curtailment in services would be drastic—seasons shortened, concerts cancelled, artists' engagements limited. Others looked for a way through the dilemma, pointing out that private support might be counted on to take up the slack. This hope seemed to dim toward the close of the year, as economic analysts began to perceive that new tax laws would make it less attractive to private enterprise to donate to nonprofit organizations. In addition, some major corporations went on record to the effect that they could not hope to fill the financial gap; it was stated, too, that NEA grants had encouraged private giving by virtue of the guidelines they provided—the evaluation process of the NEA advisory panels could not be duplicated by private corporations. However, the Presidential Task Force on the Arts and Humanities recommended that the Endowments be continued with their present structures intact. The President appointed Francis S. M. Hodsoll, a White House Deputy Assistant and former Republican Party campaigner, as chairman of the NEA.

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New Works

Meanwhile, the pace of serious music presentations continued with no visible slowdown. The role of the universities in sponsoring new-music events was notable, and indicated that here, at least, was a category of sponsor that might weather future financial adversity. For the first time, Florida State University at Tallahassee staged a contemporary festival, associated with its Center for Music Research, and won high marks for the quality of performance. Featured composers were Karel Husa, whose String Quartet No. 3 won a Pulitzer Prize in 1969, and Ellen Taffee Zwillich, an alumna of FSU. The festival encompassed a somewhat limited group of composers in geographic terms, but the range of styles was broad. The Contemporary Music Festival sponsored by CalArts and the University of California at San Diego brought together some well-known names: Vinko Globukar and Morton Feldman were in residence, the former presenting (among other works) his on-going *Laboratorium*, the latter represented by his String Quartet of 1979, in its West Coast premiere. Roger Reynolds presided over his Voice-Space IV, *The Palace*, a tour-de-force for live and computer-produced vocal lines. Politics

entered the arena by way of Luciano Berio's *Passaggio* (1962), utilizing large numbers of performers to trace the persecution of women—to no very great purpose, according to one critic.

Memphis State University staged its eighth New Music Festival, dominated by the lively presence of Michael Colgrass, whose Variations for Four Drums and Viola, together with his Percussion Music, explored aspects of imitation as well as the ways in which simple rhythms may overlap to create complex patterns. This festival, like most events of its kind, made the point that diversity and eclecticism were the order of the day; no broad trends or underlying philosophical currents emerged.

The same was true of the conference of the American Society of University Composers held in Cincinnati, where one composer remarked that "There is no avant garde because there is no main garde." Among sixty-eight works presented in eleven concerts, Gerald Plains' 1975 score, *and left ol' Joe a bone, AMAZING!,* impressed at least one listener for its effective combination of Bluegrass and a traditional hymn tune with strikingly experimental techniques. Looking back to a contemporary "old master," Indiana State University at Terre Haute focused its Contemporary Music Festival on the work of Bela Bartók, celebrating the 100th anniversary of his birth; some contemporary American music was also included. The Julliard School, too, emphasized in its Festival of Contemporary Music the work of such stalwarts as Pierre Boulez (the Second Sonata for piano, 1948), Mario Davidovsky (*Synchronisms* No. 1 for flute and tape), Frederick Rzewski (Song and Dance, 1977), and Henri Dutilleux (*Ainsi la nuit,* 1976).

Outside the festival framework, as well, many new works were introduced during the year. David del Tredici's massive *Child Alice*—a three-part work for orchestra premiered in segments over a three-year period—was finally brought to its conclusion with *All in the Golden Afternoon,* premiered by the Philadelphia Orchestra under Eugene Ormandy, with Benita Valente the soprano soloist. Based on the Alice writings of Lewis Carroll, the music illustrates Del Tredici's "path back to childhood" as exemplified in his return to tonal writing with increasing directness. John Harbison, another young composer with a sense of emotional communication and a growing audience, made his mark during the year with three premieres—a Violin Concerto judged by one critic as offering "a permanent gift to the international concert repertory"; a work for mezzo-soprano and piano called *Mottetti di Montale,* based on the poetry of the contemporary Italian Eugenio Montale and "capturing the humanity that unifies the poems"; and a Piano Quintet containing a depth of feeling and melodic invention capable of touching the listener profoundly. Charles Wuorinen was another composer highly visible on the premiere list: his *Four Fragments of If Music* for computer tape was given its first performance by Lukas Foss under the sponsorship of the Brooklyn Philharmonia and revealed both skill and wit; on a grander scale, Wuorinen was commissioned by Augustana College (Rock Island, Illinois) to write a full-length

choral/orchestral piece. *The Celestial Spheres* is a sixty-minute "divine service" based partly on biblical texts, and weaving a majestic tapestry that "excites and fascinates in all sorts of ways, despite a certain severity."

Ezra Laderman, head of the music panel of the NEA, continued a brisk pace of premieres—this year including first performances of his Concerto for String Quartet and Orchestra performed by Andre Previn and the Pittsburgh Symphony; one critic found that its combination of tonality, lyricism, and contemporary sounds never quite jelled. Other well-known Americans producing new works were Morton Gould, whose *Burchfield Gallery* drew its inspiration from the paintings of Charles Burchfield (Cleveland Orchestra); Peter Mennin, whose *Sinfonia Cappriciosa* was performed by the National Symphony under Mstislav Rostropovich; and George Crumb, who utilized Walt Whitman's "When lilacs last in the dooryard bloom'd" for his song cycle *Apparition,* written for voice and prepared piano. Jan DeGaetani and Gilbert Kalish, for whom it was written, gave the premiere.

Another important premiere during the year was that by the Boston Symphony of its commissioned score by the British composer Peter Maxwell Davies. The Second Symphony, a typically complex work displaying Davies' highly individual reinterpretation of tonality, draws its pictorial images and its architectural shape from the sea as observed by the composer during his solitary periods at his home in the Orkney Islands.

Opera

On the operatic front, the Metropolitan Opera gathered its forces after the crippling strike of late 1980, and assembled a variable season for the winter and spring. Among the highlights were the first U.S. performance of the complete *Lulu,* incorporating Alban Berg's full third act; James Levine's conducting was described as more full-bloodedly romantic than Pierre Boulez's at the Paris Opera two years earlier, contributing to a "passionate weightiness that lent the drama tremendous force." The Met orchestra played superbly, and Teresa Stratas in this title role was "utterly convincing." The live telecast (with a different soprano) generated excitement and commendation from all quarters. The Met also broke new ground with a triple bill consisting of Satie's *Parade,* Poulenc's *Les Mamelles de Tiresias,* and Ravel's *L'Enfant et les Sortilegès.* Sets and costumes were done with "brilliant visual taste and panache" by the English painter David Hockney, and the seventy-six-year-old Manuel Rosenthal conducted with notable warmth and understanding. In the fall, another triple bill, devoted exclusively to Stravinsky (*Le Sacre de Printemps, Le Rossignol, Oedipus Rex)* also engaged the talents of Hockney.

New York City Opera achieved a triumph in Janáček's *The Cunning Little Vixen,* staged with stunning visual impact thanks to sets and costumes by the children's illustrator Maurice Sendak; the opera's many animal characters were particularly appealing, and Gianna Rolandi, bedecked in fox fur, was pert and beguiling as the Vixen.

San Francisco launched its first summer opera festival, which opened with the U.S. premiere of Aribert Reimann's *Lear,* a violently dissonant and acerbic score that was a harsh trial for voices and an unsatisfactory vehicle for Shakespeare's play, in the view of at least one critic. It was staged and designed by Jean-Pierre Ponnelle, who had guided the opera's world premiere in Munich in 1978; the San Francisco setting was deemed an "illogical and ineffective mixture of two old-fashioned styles." Thomas Stewart, however, prevailed with personal success in the title role. Shostakovich's *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* was powerfully produced during San Francisco's fall season. Cincinnati Summer Opera suffered a disappointment when its much-publicized new production of Wagner's *Das Rheingold,* to be directed by the composer's great grandson Gottfried Wagner in his U.S. debut, had to be revamped at the young Wagner's last-minute cancellation. However, the twenty-nine-year-old Klas Liljefors, a stage director with the Royal Opera in Stockholm, was a quick replacement and fared very well, with a "richly humanizing" interpretation of the libretto. Christopher Keene, conducting the opera for the first time, achieved sweep and stylistic integrity.

In St. Louis, operatic fare was adventurous: a hybrid work uniting Japanese kabuki with a Western operatic approach, presented by the St. Louis Opera Theatre, worked "amazingly well." *An Actor's Revenge,* with a score for a small group of Western instruments by Minoru Miki, focused on the remarkable acting/mime gifts of Manuel Alum, in the role of a female impersonator in all-male kabuki. The music was a delicate tissue supporting, or commenting on, the lyric drama. American audiences got their first look at Philip Glass's sensationally successful opera *Satyagraha,* which had been premiered in the Netherlands in 1980. New York's Artpark staged the U.S. premiere during the summer of 1981, and the work moved on to the Brooklyn Academy in the early winter. The libretto, dealing with the life of Ghandi, consists of passages from the *Bhagavad-Gita* sung in the original Sanskrit. One critic found the work "brilliant, powerful, penetrating, original from start to stop. It mesmerizes and it leaves audiences euphoric."

A couple of major singers assumed fresh roles during the year: Renata Scotto sang her first U.S. Lady Macbeth (Verdi) at Ravinia under James Levine and was pronounced superbly effective, and Sarah Caldwell's Opera Company of Boston presented Shirley Verrett in her first-ever Desdemona (to James McCracken's Otello); she was "beautiful, passionate, and strong, capable of blazing outrage." On the reverse side of the coin, Chicago-born soprano Johanna Meier made her debut at the Bayreuth Festival, becoming the first native-born American to sing Isolde in the festival's history. Other vocal history of a kind was made when Joan Sutherland, Marilyn Horne, and Luciano Pavarotti sang together on stage for the first time, in a recital bill at Lincoln Center that was nationally televised.

Prizes and Appointments

André-Michel Schub, twenty-eight,

French-born and American trained, won the sixth Van Cliburn International Piano Competition; Chia Chou, twenty-three-year-old Canadian, won the second Sydney International Piano Competition; Nina Bodnar-Horton, a twenty-year-old native of Santa Barbara, won the eighteenth Jacques Thibaud International Violin Competition.

New York City Opera staff conductor Judith Somogi was appointed first conductor of the Frankfurt Opera commencing in the 1982–83 season; Thomas Michalak was named music adviser and principal guest-conductor of the Kansas City Philharmonic; Michael Tilson Thomas and Britisher Simon Rattle were appointed guest conductors of the Los Angeles Philharmonic.

Obituaries

The following music figures died during the year: composers Samuel Barber and Howard Hanson; violinist/pedagogue Ivan Galamian; conductors Karl Boehm and Robert Lawrence; soprano Rosa Ponselle; clarinetist Reginald Kell; Chicago Lyric Opera founder Carol Fox; San Francisco music critic Alfred Frankenstein.

What Makes Placido Run

by Robert Jacobson
Opera News
March 27, 1982

All these years, while he's been making a loud splash in the opera world, Placido Domingo remains an enigma. What more could he want, this man who has literally dominiated the recording market for well over a decade, who gives more performances in a season than any other star singer and has more televised operas to his credit, who has won recognition as a formidable singing actor in the Italian, French, and German repertories? At forty-one, his fortune already made and his place in opera history nicely established, Domingo remains restless, even petulant, about his public visibility. One wonders about these celebrated totems—does more demand more, is there a point where insatiability sets in? Domingo commands respect, cheers, even veneration wherever he sings. And yet . . . there is that shadow of Brand X looming in the background.

For a while, Domingo tended to stay in his own back yard, doing his thing, developing as a major artist, pleasing those who really care, not overly concerned with conquering the vast general public. But things have changed, and drastically. Some time ago, Domingo doffed his "nice guy" image to go to battle with Numero Uno—at least in the public's affections—Luciano Pavarotti. He claimed Pavarotti's people were sabotaging his great moments with publicity tactics. Domingo's now with his third American publicist, and all-out confrontation has been declared.

He's trying to undo mistakes and miscalculations, the biggest being a scattered recording career that produced armfuls of discs but no loyalty in terms of promotion from one company. So while Domingo was appearing in any given world capital, singing his heart out, rival record ads in the programs and major music publications and papers were touting "The World's Greatest Tenor." Domingo finally took the situation in hand, beyond crybabying to friends and associates. Firm allegiances to CBS and DG, plus occasional forays with Angel, are producing a Domingo recorded profile, with a barrage of expensive ads.

More than that, he's going for the popular market. *Perhaps Love*, a joint CBS album with John Denver, has soared to the top of the charts, and a Hollywood film (Pavarotti got there first) is due next summer with Julie Andrews, *The Merry Widow*. Last winter, when he flew into New York from London for a few days to do "Live from Studio 8H" on NBC, he found time to disc-jockey on one of New York's Country-and-Western stations. He's made Christmas and tango albums, he's jogging on national TV, he's sung with Miss Piggy for the Actors' Fund, he's been losing weight, and he's frantically trying to build a public image. As he told one West Coast reporter recently, "I have to do as much as I can in order for the media to get the right message. Apparently what I do onstage is not enough. So I have to fight that."

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Will it work? Observers are waiting to see, for the two men possess completely divergent personalities. Tall, dark, good-looking, Domingo has always been the serious introvert, the more intellectual singer, who possesses immaculate musicianship, who is a conductor's and director's dream, who acts in a variety of styles, who is a serious force in the lyric theater. Domingo finds it hard to get outside himself, and when you see him on a talk show, he is straining. He is not full of chitchat but is a realist, a pragmatist, talking about what he is doing, his voice, his roles, his plans. Onstage, Domingo makes the audience come to him—he doesn't reach out and grab them by the throat and make them love him, the way Pavarotti can. Pavarotti also began to develop a vast public by going for concerts to places where opera was something only heard on the radio or seen on television. Domingo firmly resisted this for years, fearing presenting himself naked with the music in front of an audience. Now he's trying concerts . . . reluctantly. Does he have the magic, the fierce inner strength to bring them off? Last January, he had the opportunity of a lifetime: national commercial television at prime time on a Saturday night with NBC's "Live from Studio 8H," a salute to Caruso with Zubin Mehta and the New York Philharmonic. Everything was there to be had, but coming down to the crunch, Domingo found it hard to take off. Nerves got the best of him, and his singing sounded far from its best, while his personality failed to flower in front of the revealing camera.

What will Domingo benefit from this high-powered push? Can he earn more than he does now, can he wedge in more performances than he is currently singing, can he make more complete opera recordings and solo albums than he already has? Yes, he can become more of a household name, but at what cost? What ultimately does the drain of time and energy do to the real artist's art, his integrity, his very instrument? Look to Beverly Sills in the 1970s, and Pavarotti currently, for the answers. What does Domingo want from a career that can have at least ten, perhaps twenty, good years ahead?

"I don't have financial ambitions," he was saying recently in that sweet, almost guileless speaking voice, "but I don't like to sing for nothing, either. It is a way of trying to be able to approach and embrace as many people as I can across the world. Every day we need union and peace, and the hours I can give as a performer to reach people in peaceful terms is important, if we are going to keep this world. We all should fight seriously for peace, and the most powerful act for me is to have 4,000 or 250,000 or millions of people watching what I do on television for a few hours." This may sound a little too easy, a little too Pollyanna-ish, but you have to believe him, this beaming innocent. His character, he says, goes with his name—Peaceful Sunday—"and I don't want to lose this quality. A busy, full life keeps my character even and not hot-tempered. I keep my temperament for the stage. Yes, I am ambitious, we have to be—but I cannot tell you ambitious for what. Yes, to be known by many people in my own time."

Despite this Peaceful Sunday image and manner, Domingo keeps running, defying the doom-sayers who predicted he would quickly burn himself out. He thrives on a hectic schedule, on doing roles that don't come easily, on courting fate, on wanting to be the one who sings the most. In ten years he has sung some 1,600 performances in eighty operas (it's all down in little green books he assiduously keeps—nineteen to date, green for hope). He is jet-setting all over the world, often mixing strenuous live performances with recording sessions, often not even in the same city, and TV shows on days in between. During 1981 he recorded in his diary some seventy performances of fifteen roles in twenty-one cities in ten countries.

Franco Iglesias, the baritone-turned-teacher who guided his good friend—they call each other Gordo, Spanish for "Fatso"—through difficult straits earlier in his career, insists this drive comes from Domingo's mother and father, who brought their zarzuela company from Spain to Mexico when Domingo was a child. "His mother sang every night, Monday through Friday, and on Saturday two times and on Sunday maybe three. And this was not easy singing but big and gorgeous and difficult. His father, a baritone, was incredible—handsome as hell, and such feeling! The role in *Luisa Fernanda* was never done better. So Placido is a guy from these two rocks. They loved to sing all the time, and if his mother was not on tour, she was absolutely sick. She sang all over Spain and Latin America." She was nine months pregnant with Placido and still singing, having to be brought home from the theater to give birth. "They dreamed to have a singer as a son. Placido had such facility to play the piano and conduct, and his parents knew how difficult it is to make a singing career, so he was pushed into other musical studies instead. When we worked together, and he got better as a singer, then they said O.K."

Beyond that looms the persistent shadow of Domingo's father settling for being a baritone, though he had the potential for becoming a dramatic tenor. Placido talks with boundless warmth about his family origins. "My father is from a strong region, Aragon, my mother from the Basque country—Guetaria, near St. Sebastian. Three famous people were born there: Juan Sebastian Elcano, who finished what Magellan started around the world, the couturier Balenciaga and my mother, who was a famous singer [Pepita Embil]. This little place is a national monument, a fishing place—it doesn't touch anything. You have to try the fish there. The little calamares and chipirones are tiny and fished with a hook. The merluza, shrimp, clams are something to dream about, more delicious than anything you've tried," and he sighs longingly. "The town has a famous choir, the Orfeon Onosteria, and my mother was a soloist.

"My father was born in Barcelona but considers himself Aragonese, because he grew up there. They are proud of what they did, but two great opera talents were wasted," he says, shaking his head. "He could have been a Wagner tenor and had an offer to go to Germany, but he was the oldest child, and his father died when he was ten. His mother, my grandmother, had

a restaurant in the area of Zaragoza called El Tubo, the House of the Widow Domingo—today it is Casa Colas. We would eat ternasco, mutton or kid. My father had to help her in this restaurant, but he studied music and singing, was heard and asked to go to Germany. Instead he became a false baritone, which is what I would have done if I hadn't realized in time. In zarzuelas the baritone parts are better than the tenor ones, and the public likes best the baritones.

"The composer Moreña Torroba, who wrote *El Poeta* for me, wrote a zarzuela called *Savnavarra,* and my parents met in this work. She declared her love to my father every day for three months. Finally he gave up, and they were married. My mother was to stop singing six months and learn Butterfly, Aida, and Tosca and go to the Lieceo in Barcelona. But it was a difficult situation—composers of zarzuela wrote for her, and she could not give this up. Until ten years ago I would play the piano for her, and she could hit incredible high Cs in 'In questa reggia.' "

Domingo's parents came to Mexico with a zarzuela company formed by Moreño Torroba. After a successful season there and in Cuba and Puerto Rico, they loved Mexico so much they spent a vacation there. People remembered them and asked them to stay and form their own company. Domingo and his sister came from Madrid with their aunt. That was in 1949, just three days before he turned eight. "I began young—I started life early," he retlects. He went to the Mexico City Conservatory at sixteen, the same year he married his first wife. "Times were different then," he offers. "I had principles and a way of thinking, and I wanted to marry. It lasted less than a year." He had studied piano since the age of eight and began appearing onstage as a child.

While in school and supporting a marriage, he did all kinds of things to earn a living, including playing piano in a nightclub with strippers. "I have lived all social scales in music," he says. He began singing zarzuelas as a baritone but was determined to bring the voice up to tenor range. "I had a hell of a time bringing the voice up. I had no technique, just a natural voice. In zarzuelas the baritone roles are generally higher than in opera, going up to A-flat. That was the limit, and I felt comfortable, but I realized I would need a lot more to become a tenor." Pushing him was his teacher, the Chilean baritone Carlo Morelli, brother of Renato Zanelli, a famed Otello who also began as a baritone. Says Domingo, "He had more the psychological feeling of being a tenor. He was a baritone who could sing tenor arias, placing the voice upward and thinking positively. So I started to put the voice up. Then I met Marta—fortunately! and we worked. She advised me to sing Mozart, *Cosi Fan Tutte,* and it was hell to prepare, but I accomplished it. I owe it to her insistence. We were dating and singing at the same time."

The two young singers then left Mexico for what was supposed to be a six-month stint with the Israel National Opera. "My voice was going up, and everyone was thrilled by the performances," he recalls. "But Marta would say, 'I can't hear you.'

When she was singing *Gianni Schicchi* in Mexico, at the end of the duet she had a D-flat with Enrico Di Giuseppe, who has an easy top. Franco Iglesias had been teaching Marta about diaphragm support, and she accomplished it. So we asked Franco about support and the diaphragm, which was a great revelation. We worked, all three of us, and I started to change. But there were big troubles, because I wasn't sure what I was doing. I cracked on the *Faust* B-flats all the time—monumental cracks," he quickly demonstrates. "I was in the process of changing my approach, my technique. And I decided to leave singing because of these cracks. Marta and Franco said it didn't matter and to work on the diaphragm. And that has been the secret for me since 1963. Every day I feel more secure vocally."

Iglesias recalls their relationship vividly. "My debut at fifteen years was with Pepita, Placido's mother, in the zarzuela *Molinas di Viento*. It was our third season in Monterrey, and one night I see a little fat boy with dark curly hair in the wings—Placidino from Madrid. He was eight and had just arrived. I went to Italy to continue my career, but I was back when Placido first conducted at sixteen, for his mother and me in *Luisa Fernanda,* and he was handsome as hell in his white coat. He was a baritone then, and he and I formed a brotherhood. He was singing small roles in Mexico in operettas, *My Fair Lady* and so on. One day with his mother, we decided Placido is a tenor. I talked to him and told him the problem is breathing and support, and we began to work a little.

"Later Marta became his fiancée, and I helped them get together, because I was married, and we traveled together with Placido and Marta—you know how Mexican and Spanish people are! Marta studied with me, and she had a beautiful voice. Placido had a scholarship in Mexico to prepare an opera, *Tosca* for the Bellas Artes, and I helped him with this tough role. He did *Adriana Lecouvreur* there, and then they went to Israel.

"Now, this is where the real story comes," Iglesias goes on, excitement in his voice. "I went to Israel in 1962, and Placido was singing there. I felt he was singing on his youth, strength and desire, but the technique was lacking. He was doing everything from *Don Giovanni* to *La Bohème* and *Eugene Oengin* and *Faust,* but he was struggling with his voice. We talked one day, and it was the moment of truth: I said he could have a grogeous career but he had to take care of his voice, and Marta said, 'Why not teach him again?' But Placido loved to sleep, and in Israel it was so hot, and so on. Every day at four I went to his door and knocked, and he would answer he wanted to sleep. But we needed to work! My technique was support by and movement in the diaphragm with a column of sound. He got this after three and a half months.

"I asked the company director, Edis De Philippe, to give him nothing to sing while we worked. Placido is so gifted and quick. Then his new voice made a debut, bigger and more secure. It was a Saturday *Madama Butterfly,* and he had such a success! There was no strain, and he felt himself. He could make any movement freely

onstage, because there was no vocal problem to worry about. Then he made his debut as Don José, filling in for a Canadian tenor who was sick. He was afraid, but I told him to do it, and he was not to be believed. Marta was the Micaela. After that he sang his whole repertory there. He did his first *Cavalleria,* and at that age we wondered what will become of this guy, because at the 'S'io non tornassi,' where his voice came from we didn't know. He was twenty or twenty-one and felt his voice growing and growing.

"We worked for more than a year. Then he left to do Hoffmann in Mexico, and I say, 'Be careful, because that tessitura is high, high.' Every phrase we study together. Take 'Bella tu sei' in *Adriana*—this guy, at his Met debut, remembered everything we did with it in Israel to get the phrase in one breath. He never forgot for a moment what security, what power he has is coming from the knowledge of the diaphragm I gave him. I say, 'You are a bull singing all over,' and he says I make him a bull. It was to use the diaphragm, not the throat—use the interest and leave the capital.

"Placido is terrific with me. I brought him to Mexico to sing some songs in a church for television, and while he dresses in the room he says, 'Carlito, we are three people here now—you, me and God.' I feel this still in my throat." says Iglesias, visibly choked up. " 'We knew I could make a fair career,' he was telling me, 'but I never thought to be the tenor I am today, and I thank you in front of God.' " Iglesias is silent.

Today, Marta reigns as his most severe critic and adviser, "my best judge. She is a wife who understands," says the tenor. "She is in the audience, not onstage, sitting out front and looking at the singing, acting and timing—even during rehearsals. She has a clinical eye and sees everything in taste and phrasing, but she never interferes in the theater." He remembers their early, simpler life in Israel as difficult times financially. "We used to cook for each other, depending on who was singing. Marta had a beautiful lyric voice but stopped when she was expecting Placi in 1965 in Tel Aviv. He was born, and she realized my career was making an important development. Placi was small and needed care, and Marta demands so much of herself. She felt the singing career is constant, that you cannot go away from it for months and return. She has no regrets. She made me feel that if one of us went on with it, it must be me. I make her sing at parties, and all faces look in wonder"—his jaw falls open in astonishment, eyes rolling—"because of this warm voice and temperament. She makes me cry, because so seldom does she do it, and she is so emotional in her singing."

As for himself, Domingo observes, "Vocally now, more or less everything is in place, if I am rested and healthy." As for the notorious high C, which Domingo more often than not avoids in performance, he insists, "No, it is not a frustration. I don't deny I would be happy if I had an easy high C. But I am in great company, because the greatest of all, Caruso, was not happy with his high C and sang it little. Also Gigli. My voice is still going up, so

maybe one day. . . ." He shrugs. He has said he does take the note in *Manon Lescaut, Un Ballo in Maschera, Turandot,* and *Otello* but not in *La Bohème, Il Trovatore,* and *Faust,* depending on the approach to the top and the general tessitura of the passage. "It is not such a big thing for me, because I don't base my singing on just one note. And how many people really know what is a high C? A brilliant B-flat they love, because they feel it is a high note. There are only those few who know."

Looking at his tenor predecessors, he feels there is no one comparable to Caruso, and then a handful of others: "The first one I admired in life was Di Stefano, an artist but not disciplined. He sang when he was inspired. With Caruso I admire everything—the incredible tower of sound, equal registers, especially F to B-flat. And Miguel Fleta for temperament, Aureliano Pertile for his modern, present-day kind of singing, Peerce for easy production. Bjoerling had incredible sound and easiness, and Gigli had freshness of voice, with joy in his singing. I love the geniality of Di Stefano. Tucker had endurance and size of voice—the biggest B-natural I ever heard was his in *Tosca,* 'La vita mi costasse.' And Corelli had one of the most exciting, animal sounds, especially around A-natural."

The situation at present he finds less than hopeful, as do most honest observers. "It is a matter of theaters becoming less demanding. You see people today who wouldn't have been singing onstage a few years ago. The star system is not letting talent develop. I see talent but not enough people prepared to teach. Then, once some are prepared, they have trouble being engaged by big theaters. I don't find tenors between twenty-five and thirty. Shicoff, Dvorsky, and Ciannella are the youngest, and they are already over thirty. I made my debut at the Met at twenty-seven. A singer should be making his name in his late twenties.

"There are no big teachers, but a lot of people without talent are studying too. It's just that modern attitude of human rights—'If I study, I can be a great opera singer.' It's an attitude like any other career, that if you concentrate and study all the books on law or medicine, you can do it. But you can't be a great singer if you don't have the material, no matter how much you study. Teachers have only a few students who are good. This business is so serious that teachers should have the knowledge and be cruel to tell the truth, because it is important to concentrate on real talent. There are so many voices today, but you can't imagine what I've heard." He shakes his head in disgust, throwing up his hands at the very thought.

As for his own career, despite struggles at the beginning, everything has tended to sail on easily. "It's a different struggle," he says quietly, "with yourself, to maintain the place you arrive at and not go down. Every day is more difficult, because a sold-out theater expects so much from you. The demands of the public make a constant, endless struggle." For Domingo the big break-through came with Ginastera's *Don Rodrigo,* which opened the New York City Opera's new home at Lincoln Center on February 22, 1966. As he puts

it, "It was a surprise for everyone with this completely unknown twenty-five-year-old tenor in a tremendous part. But I would think twice if it were offered today," and he laughs, his face crinkling up.

Two years later he was at the Met in *Adriana Lecouvreur*. "The Met is a must now," he says suddenly. "I've never been overexposed there—maybe twelve or fourteen performances each season. My intention has been to move around and never be overexposed in any theater. But for the Met's centennial, 1983–84, I will spend more time. My instinct says to have people say, 'Why don't we have more of him?' not the other way around. You have to keep it special. In New York I will never sing beyond twenty-five times a season maximum.

"But I resent the situation sometimes too, and I ask the Met at the end of a season or in a June Festival to have a half-dozen juicy operas so I can do five or six roles, because it can be ten years before I do a role here again. For instance, Maurizio I have not done at the Met since my debut in 1968. An opera I do well is Rodolfo in *La Bohème*, but rarely here. I'm speaking of repertory parts that I would like to do every two or three years for the public—Don José, Canio, Rodolfo, Otello, Cavaradossi." Another gripe: "I don't like to be in a place to rehearse one month, and I made it clear to the Met I had to have two or three performances during that rehearsal period. So this year when I rehearse *Hoffmann* I have *Bohème* and the Verdi Requiem. Otherwise you lose contact with the public. People know you are in the city, but they wonder what you are doing. Now we plan to 1985–86, and I get scared to think of it, this computerizing life! One year I will not accept anything in advance and go around at the last minute where they need me—I won't commit myself to a long period anywhere."

This may be mere daydreaming, for Domingo seems possessed by the idea of performing, giving all he has on any given night. Iglesias says, "I say to Placido now, 'Do quality, smaller quantity, and do publicity and live as a human being. You are who you are now.' He's always running all over the place. People should see him as alive and human. But he is singing, singing, with one leg in *Bohème* and one leg in *Rigoletto* and saying, 'I am doing Otello next week.' How much can anyone take on planes? He needs calm and relaxation. But opera is a sickness for him, it's everything, and he can't resist an offer on the telephone. It's a pazzia for him to be onstage. In his dressing room he prays and then goes to the stage, and when the curtain opens it's like he gets a shot of something. He sees the lights and the public and hears the music, and he is a completely different person.

"And," Iglesias continues rapid-fire, "from the beginning to the end of a performance, he doesn't let anything bother him. He's as if in a temple for a few hours, with only the music and the role and what he has to do for that time. He sings everything the way the composer wrote it, and he cares about this, while others think it doesn't matter and sing it whatever way. He studies well and uses his technique in a perfectly clear way. He always knew how much blood you need to arrive at a career,

to be honest in the profession. He was always strong, prepared, ready.''

Domingo tries to define the difference between being a musician and just plain knowing music: ''Singers can be musicians but not know music. Conductors can know all the music in the world but have no feeling for music, because they are intellectual, analytical. Yes, it is good and necessary to know music—all the facts, rules, the deep things of harmony and counterpoint, all the keys of what instruments play, and be able to read scores. But,'' he stresses, ''the moment you are on the podium it is essential to be a musican by nature, despite all you know. With a singer too, I do not like to hear a musically well-trained one who makes me feel they are singing a dotted note. It's the line of singing with the dots and legato and staccato, but not making me feel these things are there. To make music, you have to go beyond all these things. Music is like painting, in terms of technique. The colors are there, but the painter doesn't tell you about the blue and yellow and brown used in a certain way to create the feeling of gold. You see it or you don't. It is there or it is not.''

Color is the key too in the way he considers repertory. Domingo has been notorious for not concentrating on a handful of roles or even a certain repertory but instead trying almost everything. ''It is better to have variety,'' he says simply, ''and I learn very fast. I know my voice better than anyone. I keep it lighter every day through coloring. If I do Otello, it has to have a baritone color, dark and thick. It's not for me to say, but how much easier it is for me to sing Riccardo in *Ballo* and Alfredo in *Traviata* today. It shows I sing with my voice, and only the color changes.' Nay-sayers predicted doom when Domingo, still a far throw from forty, decided to try his first Otello in Paris a half-dozen years ago. He was using up his voice, they said—it couldn't last. Now he has done the role at La Scala, the Met, in South America, Bregenz and elsewhere, coming through with flying colors. ''I proved I was not doing anything crazy, because between September 1978 and March 1981 I did three big television events from the Met—*Otello, Manon Lescaut,* and *La Traviata*—and the Alfredo sounded right, which proves I know what I can do with my voice. And I'm glad I've proved everyone wrong!''

Observes Iglesias, ''Otello was something he knew inside himself. He felt it was the door to other big roles. Look, he did Samson at twenty-two! Otello was inside him. All the trust he had for years when he came to Otello made him better and better for *Ballo* and *Tosca*. Otello was the door to open to the real Domingo. On the other hand,'' Iglesias adds, ''if anything it was too sudden. He might have stayed longer in the lyric roles before doing the dramatic ones. He says he is not a high-C tenor, but he has those notes. I never felt he had to fatten his voice too soon. When you open the voice, you have to be careful. You need a roof on the voice as it gets wider. His high notes are not easy, but they are true, and he has Bs and Cs naturally. Maybe he should have stayed with *Lucia* and *Bohème* and *Traviata*

longer and let the voice open with age, not with strength."

Domingo's life is full of plans, ideas, activity. Still, there is the family situation. He has an older boy, twenty-three, who is a photographer living in London, and two younger ones, thirteen and sixteen, who are in school in Switzerland after having lived briefly in America and then in Spain, with and without their parents. "Today for youth is difficult," Domingo notes. "They start early to have personality and to think they know what to do. The boys were in school in Spain, and we were losing control. They did not know what to do and study, because there are no jobs. The boys grow up full of hopes and don't know what to prepare for in life. For me it is difficult if I make it an easy life with so many things for them. Suddenly, I don't know how to handle them. I'd like them to be involved in music, but I don't push it. Placi plays the cello and piano and has an incredible ability to improvise at the piano and write beautiful melodies."

Spain was felt to be too narrow for the boys in terms of cultural exposure. In Switzerland they are getting a complete education. "But," and his tone fills with regret, "the most important thing is to sit at the dinner table, because there comes all the problems—a confession place. If you don't sit and eat, you never solve problems."

But he has a mind full of things. He's conducting more and more in Europe, and for 1984–85 he will lead all the Met performances of *La Bohème*. Having begun with Igor Markevitch's classes in Mexico City, he pursues occasional classes in Vienna but mainly learns from the conductors with whom he works, commenting on the clarity of technique of James Levine, the expression of Carlos Kleiber, the flamboyant style of Zubin Mehta, the majesty of Carlo Maria Giulini. "Since I don't do it so often, I am too busy with my style. That will disappear! The more I work, the easier it becomes, and the more I trust the musicians. I get carried away, too emotional, and that is not necessary. But I have a natural feeling for music and am improving."

Domingo talks about doing more concerts, though "I am not convinced," and he shakes his head. "I want to do something different and sing all kinds of music in an open approach—and not for 2,000 people but five or ten or fifteen thousand. For the sybarites, one day I will do a pure lieder concert. But," and he shrugs, "I am not convinced of a concert of French and German songs and arias. My idea is to go from classical to popular, also with Latin American and Spanish music."

He'd like to do a big Latin American concert, with costumes and dancing, at Madison Square Garden. He'd like to do concerts of music from zarzuelas and full-length works like *La Verbena de la Paloma, Luisa Fernanda,* and *Doña Fracisquita*. He'd like to form a zarzuela company to play cities across America, wherever there are communities of Spanish-speaking people. "I received an offer to be the symbol of Spanish-speaking people here in New York," he says with pride and excitement. He talks of the growing Spanish-speaking TV network, about a concert from Buenos Aires to 800

stations in Latin America, North America, and the Philippines. "I want to go beyond the opera public in my approach."

Meanwhile, Placido has taken up golf and tennis. Last summer he played in a soccer game with the Salzburg Festival people against the radio-TV men, together with actor Maximiiian Schell, "and we won seven to four. It was an exciting game, with 5,000 people watching and TV cameras." He's talking about a small theater with a school to train young singers, about getting involved with a new Los Angeles opera company that will have full television facilities in a rebuilt auditorium. "After my singing career, I will run a theater and conduct. I must be in the theater!"

Charles Koechlin: Rediscovering a Unique, Forgotten French Composer

by Boaz Sharon
Ovation
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To most music lovers, a reference to French music of the early twentieth century readily brings to mind Debussy, Ravel, and perhaps Satie, Poulenc, and Milhaud. Their music and that of a handful of other composers has deservedly found a permanent place in the repertoire. However, there are other French composers who made unique contributions to the literature; one of the foremost among these is Charles Koechlin (1867–1950) who has been accurately described as "one of the great unknowns in modern music."

Out of Koechlin's vast output of hundreds of compositions, written in just about every genre and for every combination of instruments, more than half remain unpublished, and there are only seven listings of recordings in the Schwann and Gramophone record catalogs. This inexplicable neglect of Koechlin, who was held in high esteem by Satie, Debussy, Ravel, Falla, and many others, was described as "one of the greatest injustices of our time" by his onetime student, Darius Milhaud.

There are better reasons than mere historical curiosity for music lovers to take a closer look at Koechlin. The impressionistic and post-impressionistic repertoire is very limited when compared to the virtually inexhaustible Baroque, Classical, or Romantic repertoire; even if only a single work among Koechlin's best works were to establish itself in the concert hall, we all would be enriched as a result.

And Koechlin's music is like no other. It is permeated with a hypnotic serenity and introspection that we like to attribute to the Orient. It often possesses an improvisatory quality seldom found in Western music, and, more importantly, it is distinguished by unsurpassed clarity, simplicity, and a profound sincerity. In its dynamic range it shares the world of Debussy's opera *Pelleas et Melisande,* in which few *forte* markings punctuate the score.

Partly because of his eclecticism and partly because of his harmonic language, some have advanced an attractive theory claiming him to be a missing link between Debussy and Messiaen. There is something to this theory, for I can think of one splendid example of Koechlin's work which produces the same hypnotic effect and haunting sonorities that we find in early works by Messiaen written during the 1930s. I refer to Koechlin's piano cameo, *La Priere de l'homme.*

Until recently only one major symphonic work, *Les Bandar Log,* has been available on disc, brilliantly recorded in 1965 with the B.B.C. orchestra under the direction of

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Antal Dorati, on Decca Records (now deleted). The recordings of this work, which depicts a swarm of very energetic jungle monkeys, did not immediately lead to a spate of additional Koechlin recordings. However, it did spark the interest of a good number of musicians, thus paving the way for several new recordings and an upcoming book on the life and work of Koechlin (Robert Orledge/University of California Press).

Sixteen years after its recording release, *Les Bandar Log* remains a good point of departure for the exploration of Koechlin's music. Although written in 1935, this symphonic poem, with its colorful orchestration and quasi-Schoenbergian passages, is so forward-looking for its time that it is comfortably included on the same record with other avant-garde works such as *Chronochromie* by Messiaen and *Le Soleil des Eaux* by Boulez.

Koechlin was born into a rich Alsatian family in Paris. His Alsatian heritage and temperament, which Koechlin himself described as an "energy, naivety, and absolute and very simple sincerity," are crucial to an understanding of much of his often enigmatic music.

Although his parents intended for him to have a career as an artillery officer, with studies at the prestigious Ecole Polytechnique, these plans were thwarted by a serious illness and convalescence. During his convalescence he embarked on intensive musical studies that led to his entry into the Paris Conservatory at the comparatively late age of twenty-three. There he studied with Massenet, the famous Gedalge (teacher of Ravel and others), and Gabriel Faure. Of the three, Faure was to exert the most lasting influence on Koechlin, who strove in his own music to capture his mentor's classical nobility, clarity, and simplicity.

It is therefore hardly surprising that Koechlin's first works, exclusively in the domain of song-writing, can be considered as a direct continuation of Faure's legacy. A good case in point is Koechlin's song, *Si tu le veux* (a song easily mistaken for one by Faure), sung at one time or another by many aspiring sopranos. Little by little, Koechlin developed his highly personal, luminous, polytonal style, which found its highest expression in the piano suite *Landscapes and Seascapes,* written in 1915–16. This wartime composition cannot be mistaken for anyone else's and is a landmark in French music.

Between Koechlin's first work, the five *Rondels* (1980) and his last, *Motets in an Archaic Style* (1950), there are close to 220 compositions written over a sixty-year period. And as if that were not vast enough, one work may contain over 100 individual movements, as is the case with *Les Chants de Nectaire* for unaccompanied flute.

Because of ever-looming financial difficulties, and a constant struggle to get his works accepted, Koechlin described his life as a "series of happy chances under a cloud of misfortune." For example, the necessity to teach led him to a careful study of Bach that accounts for the complex web of counterpoint often found in his music, perhaps to a degree unequaled in other French music of the period. His

need to teach also resulted in his tutoring of Francis Poulenc, Darius Milhaud, and Cole Porter, who studied with him in Paris in 1923.

Throughout his long life, Koechlin strove to maintain his artistic independence, which resulted in his refusal of the prestigious Legion d'Honneur, conferred on him by the French government in 1949. Earlier, he turned down an attractive offer from Satie to join a group of composers under his aegis known as "les Nouveaux Jeunes." To be himself and to write for himself was his ideal and he once wrote, "The life of an artist who thinks above all of beauty is one of the most enviable in existence."

Koechlin visited the United States on three different occasions between 1919–1937, and was a representative of French art at the White House at President Wilson's invitation. He taught for a time at the University of California at Santa Barbara. Perhaps his close proximity to Hollywood explains his fascination for the "insolent beauty" of its stars, which he celebrated in more than a hundred musical cameos such as the *Epitaph for Jean Harlow* for saxophone, flute, and piano.

Sporting a striking Tolstoian beard, and often clad in bohemian or even shepherd's clothing, Koechlin retained a remarkably youthful spirit in his old age, and an interest in everything around him—at seventy-five he amazed even his own children by climbing Mont Blanc unaided. This youthful spirit is carried intact into such late works as the Preludes for Piano, Op. 209, in which the pervading qualities are simplicity, lucidity, and a sophisticated naivete.

A close friend of both Satie and Debussy, whose biographies he wrote, Koechlin was highly respected by both. It is a measure of the esteem Debussy had for Koechlin that he entrusted him with the orchestration of his Egyptian ballet *Khamma*. The story goes that Debussy, preoccupied with his *Le Martyr de St. Sebastien,* remarked offhandedly to Koechlin one day, "You write *Khamma* and I'll sign it," and so it happened. *Khamma* is one of the pitiably few Koechlin works on record, giving us a rare glimpse into his "unexplored and likewise unexploited" world.

Khamma is but one of several works that Koechlin orchestrated for others. Even before establishing his reputation as a master orchestrator, he was invited by Faure (who had little patience for orchestrating his own works) to score his well-known symphonic suite *Pelleas et Melisande*. Later, Koechlin helped Cole Porter with the orchestration of his ballet *Within the Quota* (1924).

In spirit, Koechlin is closer to Satie's ideology than to either Ravel's or Debussy's. Both Koechlin and Satie are successful miniaturists, masters of the understatement, and musical painters able to convey a universe of ideas with a few simple strokes. Although perfectly capable of handling large-scale symphonic works, such as the vast *Jungle Book,* Koechlin, like Satie, was ultimately most successful at writing music of smaller dimensions, such as the eighty-nine cameos of the suite *Portrait of Daisy Hamilton* for piano, in honor of the now all-but-forgotten Hollywood actress Lilian Harvey. After all, he once said, while discussing the miniatures

of his friend Satie, "a small Japanese ivory is worth more, isn't it, than the many official statues which adorn our public squares and turn them into cemeteries." This statement applies with equal force to Koechlin's own unique miniatures, such as the piano suite *Landscapes and Seascapes,* considered by Wilfred Mellers, a well-known British musicologist, to be "one of the few outstanding piano works of our time."

In other, larger aspects Satie and Koechlin differ: Koechlin's sincerity and the supreme tranquility that his works convey cannot be confused with Satie's biting irony and cleverness. And Koechlin's lush harmonies and sinuous melodies are distinctly his own. As Ned Rorem recently wrote: "Like Ives and Satie he seems to have been a law unto himself." When once asked the question, "To which school do you belong?" the composer quipped, "To my own, of course."

He also was eclectic in the best sense of the word, eclecticism being a quality that runs like a thread through French music. Thus, he borrowed elements from just about every conceivable source: Gregorian chant, medieval techniques of twelfth- and thirteenth-century composers Leonin and Perotin, the French popular chanson, polytonality (music comprised of two or more keys), twelve-tone and even proto-electronic music all combine in his music in a wonderful and unique melange.

Why, then, has he been neglected? The answer to that, I think, is in two parts. First, Koechlin was reluctant to promote his own music. Antal Dorati refers to the composer's habit of putting his compositions into storage, once completed, with little concern about their destiny. More importantly, most of his music cannot serve as a vehicle for virtuosic display. Thus, thunderous octaves, rippling scale work, and cascading arpeggios are all foreign to him. Rather, like a rare cognac, the music is to be sipped slowly, reflectively; and as with a fine cognac, gradual familiarity leads to a heightened appreciation.

As such, his music matches the atmosphere created by Debussy's "Sunken Cathedral" and Satie's delightful *Gymnopedies*. While these works are technically unspectacular, they have entered the hearts of countless music lovers and amateur pianists. I can think of a number of compositions by Koechlin that might attain the same degree of popularity, such as "Slow Dance" from the *Dances for Ginger Rogers*. Given the recent rediscoveries of Scriabin, Satie, and even Alkan, it is entirely possible that Koechlin may soon enjoy a similar surge in popularity, if only given a chance.

The following is, by necessity, a limited summary of Koechlin's works, designed to whet the appetite of both listener and performer.

The Piano Works

Altogether there are seventeen piano works. Chief among these are the twelve *Landscapes and Seascapes,* the five *Dances for Ginger Rogers,* the sixteen *Persian Hours,* and *The Old Country House*.

For the amateur, with a relatively limited technical ability, I would like to suggest trying the delightful *Sonatina No. 2* and,

technical ability, I would like to suggest trying the delightful *Sonatina No. 2* and, in particular, the *Sicilienne* movement—irresistible and unmistakably Gallic.

For those who like Debussy's prelude "Sunken Cathedral," a good choice is "Promenade towards the Sea" from *Landscapes and Seascapes*. This piece is striking because of its glacial quality and because of the progressions of immense and 'luminous' chords (a shimmering quality of sound for which the composer constantly strove).

"Those Who Go Fishing on the Open Sea at Night" is another good candidate for the amateur. In its jagged rhythms and lush chords it resembles contemporary jazz and could almost pass for an improvisation by Herbie Hancock. (Incidentally, the late jazz pianist Mary Lou Williams liked this work for the same reasons).

The "Virgilian Poem," also from *Landscapes,* brings the suite to its placid close. It is unusual in that there is no exact repetition of themes; the melody never retraces its steps and always goes on to explore new landscapes until the utterly peaceful conclusion. The "Slow Dance" from the *Dances for Ginger Rogers* is a latter-day *Gymnopedie* in Koechlinesque clothing and, as such, it is a tribute to both Satie and Ginger Rogers.

All of the above-mentioned pieces can easily be played by the amateur pianist at the level of, say, Debussy's "The Girl with the Flaxen Hair" or "The Sunken Cathedral." The one important thing to remember is that whenever a chord is so widely spaced as to preclude the simultaneous sounding of all notes, the player should strike the lowest part of the chord first, directly followed by the rest.

The Orchestral Works

Each musician acquainted with Koechlin has a favorite orchestral composition, of which there are seventy-one! Of these, the best known is *Les Bandar Log,* one of seven symphonic poems inspired by Kipling's *Jungle Book.* As mentioned earlier, it portrays a swarm of inordinately energetic monkeys. These beasts are used metaphorically to poke fun at those composers who blindly mimic Schoenberg's twelve-tone technique. Never intended to be an attack on Schoenberg himself (but merely a broadside at trendy snobs), this work has several splendid passages utilizing strict twelve-tone techniques, of which Koechlin was a pioneer in pre-war France. Another exotic feature in this work is the use of the Ondes Martenot, granddaddy of the electronic synthesizer and an instrument often used in horror movies.

The entire cycle of *The Jungle Book,* only seventy-five minutes in duration, was successfully performed in Brussels in 1948 on the Belgian Radio and more recently, in 1980, with the Rotterdam Philharmonic under David Zinman.

Koechlin himself liked *The Burning Bush,* based on Romain Rolland's novel *Jean Christophe,* which abstractly tells the story of Beethoven's life, and shortly before his death, Koechlin expressed a wish in a B.B.C. interview to hear the *Offering on the Name of Bach. The Pagan Joy* was the winning entry in the Hollywood Bowl composition contest, which was subsequently performed there in 1937. There

is also a work called *Javanese Suite,* which is a transcription of authentic Javanese music using Western instruments.

Perhaps the most curious symphonic work is *Symphony of the Seven Stars* (1937). Far from dealing with the stars in heaven, this work celebrates the "insolent beauty" of the stars in Hollywood's firmament: Charlie Chaplin, Douglas Fairbanks, Greta Garbo, Marlene Dietrich, and others are each given a movement whose motif is derived from the star's name. Despite its spectacular title, this is nevertheless a very serious, sincere work that may require several attentive hearings. There is a consensus that the Chaplin movement is the highlight of this maverick work, which was given its American premiere in 1980 by the Dallas Symphony.

The "Dervishes in the Night," the last work in the sixteen *Persian Hours,* orchestrated from the piano original by Koechlin, amply fulfills the promise of the title: whirling dervishes dance, then disappear into the moonlit distance as the piece ends on the threshold of inaudibility.

Discography

Cinq chorals dans les modes du moyen-age. Louisville Orchestra, Mester cond. Louisville S-682.

Clarinet and Piano Pieces, Opp. 141, 178. Ciompi, clar. Orion (soon to be released).

The Jungle Book. Radio Nederland (privately placed with most U.S. classical radio stations).

Partita for Chamber Orchestra (1945). Louisville Orchestra, Mester cond. Louisville 736.

Landscapes and Seascapes, Op. 63; Pastorales, Op. 77; other piano works. Sharon, pianist. Orion 79332.

Trio for Flue, Clarinet and Bassoon. Benington Trio. Golden Crest 4140(Q).

Debussy-Koechlin, *Khamma (1912).* French National Radio Orchestra, Martinon cond. Angel S-37068(Q).

Faure-Koechlin, *Pelleas et Melisande, Op. 80 (1898).* Paris Conservetoire, Baudo cond., Nonesuch 71178; Orchestre de Paris, Baudo cond., Seraphim S-60273; New Philharmonia, A. Davis cond., CBS M-34506; Luxembourg Radio Orchestra, Froment cond., Turnabout 34587(Q); Rotterdam Philharmonic, Zinman cond., Philips 6769 045.

Music in Print

(Many orchestral works available through G. Schirmer.)

Dances for Ginger Rogers. Eschig (Paris); available through G. Schirmer.

Landscapes and Seascapes. Senant (Paris).

Sonatina No. 2. Salabert (Paris).

The author wishes to express his deep appreciation to Antal Dorati, Elise Kirk, Yves Koechlin, Madelaine Li-Koechlin, Robert Orledge, and Les Editions Max Eschig of Paris for their help.

Kentucky Minstrel

by Howard Carpenter
The American Music Teacher
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Anton Philipp Heinrich had a consuming passion for all things American. For him the Indian of Kentucky's "dark and bloody ground" was the "noble savage." At a time when American painters, writers and musicians looked east to Europe for inspiration and "culture," Heinrich championed the American cause and wished to be known as the "Kentucky Minstrel." Despite his wishes, the press and admirers bestowed upon him the unofficial title of "Beethoven of America." Born in 1781 in Bohemia, Heinrich's American saga began in the early 1800s upon the decease of his foster uncle, a rich merchant. Entrusting the management of the mercantile business to others, the wandering minstrel utilized his new-found wealth to satisfy both his wanderlust and his curiosity about America. On the way through Italy he acquired a violin by Amati. Some time after his arrival in Philadelphia, news arrived that his business had been ruined by a combination of mismanagement and the vicissitudes of the Napoleonic wars. A year later the Austrian currency crash left him penniless. With the Amati strapped to his back, he made his way by foot to Pittsburgh where he conducted a theater orchestra for a short period. When the theater failed, he continued down the Ohio Valley through Limestone (Maysville) to Louisville via Lexington.

While in Lexington he organized and performed in a concert at Keene and Lanphear's Assembly Room. The concert was, and is, notable in the annals of American music for the first performance of a Beethoven symphony in America. The date was November, 1817, ten years before Beethoven's death and in the second decade of the first symphony's existence. Beethoven undoubtedly knew no more of this frontier performance than did the rest of America. Thirty years later, the citizens of Chicago requested of the touring Germania orchestra that a Beethoven symphony be included in their program, noting that such a work had never been heard in their great city.

Lexingtonians of today are justly vocal in their pride of this premiere. The practical aspects of performing a symphony in Lexington in 1817 give cause for wonder. Where did the performers and the parts come from? What kind of group played this orchestral work? That large instrumental works were often performed by small chamber groups is indicated by the number of publications at that time for such arrangements. A pianist and string quartet or trio could provide a satisfactory reading of a symphonic work for a music club or public gathering in a community with no orchestra. Probably a few Transyl-

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Dr. Carpenter, a faculty member and former head of the Music Department, Western Kentucky University at Bowling Green, is a member of the *AMT* Editorial Committee, and a frequent reviewer of string music for its columns. © 1982 by *The American Music Teacher*. All rights reserved. Used with permission.

vania professors and other music lovers formed a small chamber ensemble under the enthusiastic leadership of Heinrich.

Incredible as the performance may seem, viewed in relation to its time and place, we should remember that Lexington, with less than 6,000 inhabitants, had adopted the surname of "The Athens of the West" in contrast to the commercial towns of Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, and Louisville. At that time Lexington had four newspapers, four literary journals, and a theater. Whether the musical society of 1803 still existed is not known. Certainly this relative profusion of culture drew no little of its instigation and support from the resident Transylvania University. Concerts, although of poor quality, were regularly performed, according to one contemporary. Heinrich's short but historic tarry in Lexington preceded an appearance two weeks later in Frankfort where his ability on the violin was given due credit.

There followed a sojourn in Louisville. He again performed in concert and became ingratiated with the distinguished family of Judge Speed, a brother of Congressman Speed. He lived with the Speed family for a time in Farmington and it was here that a lasting friendship with John Audubon developed. It is possible that Heinrich may have been a teacher of Audubon's son, a violinist. Though Louisville was given short shrift as a center of culture by Lexingtonians in the early 1810s and 1820s, it did boast a well-known theater established by Sam Drake of Albany, N.Y. From the cultural point of view, Heinrich's brief stay provided a high point in the offerings, with two appearances on May 11, 1819 and again on June 18. Singled out for comment at the time were his variations on Yankee Doodle. They were noted as being well performed and well constructed. The names of Beethoven, Mozart, and Haydn were absent from the programs.

Whatever Heinrich's itinerant accomplishments may have been previously, it was near the age of forty that he surrendered his life wholeheartedly to music through composition. Without benefit of instruction, while living in "the then solitary wilds and primeval forests of Kentucky" (Bardstown), he wrote many pieces for voice, piano, violin, and ensemble. Opus 1 consists of songs, waltzes, cotillions, minuets, polonaises, marches, and variations, and is titled, "The Dawning of Music in Kentucky or the Pleasures of Harmony in the Solitudes of Nature." The dedications which preface each piece provide a list of Heinrich's friends in Farmington, Shelbyville, Bardstown, and Louisville. Although the trills, runs, arpeggios and chromatic scales in this first work show a profusion of inventiveness, there is a modicum of genuine musical value. "A Bottle Song" for Thirsty Virtuosos ends with a four-measure coda, "Tops in Turva" written upside down. Five variations on the Austrian National Anthem are preceded by an anguished petition to the Queen of Austria for support of a six-year-old daughter whom Heinrich left in Bohemia upon the death of her mother. The concluding Yankee Doodle-iad for piano quintet is a tour de force including Hail Columbia and a set of variations on

Yankee Doodle interrupted by a musical "Huzza" for Washington.

The "Western Minstrel" or sequel to the "Dawning of Music in Kentucky" contains an acknowledgment of his financial plight that was prophetic of the later years: "A. P. Heinrich experiences that the Profession to which he is most enthusiastically attached will not afford him even a bare subsistency. Only a few days ago Dame Capriccio so frowned on the ill-fated author, as to transpose him sforzando, to the diatonic, chromatic, enharmonic Turnkey of one of those hospitable public mansions, where the Unfortunate finds an Asylum, free and safe: Bread and water to prolong starvation, and a Brick, cold as the heart of the extortionate, for a Pillow."

In 1821 Heinrich left for the east and three trips to Europe. The first two of these were spent in London playing violin in the Drury Lane Theater and Vauxhall Gardens. In 1846, the musical public of New York and Boston acclaimed him as the "Beethoven of America." He may have been the first, through his programmatic works, to concern himself with Indians. In Boston his program included an Overture, "To the Pilgrims," and an Overture, "Tecumseh."

Following his poverty-stricken death in 1861, Heinrich's music was consigned to oblivion. Ninety years followed before "Wildwood Troubadour" was performed by Robert Whitney and the Louisville Orchestra on November 7, 1951. Another twenty-five years elapsed before a commercial recording of his works appeared in 1976. The citizens of Kentucky have pride and affection for this literally strolling musician who carried to Kentucky, along with his violin, a deep love for music and for America.

An Interview with Maureen Young

Maureen Young was interviewed by Shirley Emanuel, Assistant Music Section Head, when she visited the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped Music Section on February 8, 1982. Ms. Young, a braille music reader and coloratura soprano, made her operatic debut as Mimi in the New York Grand Opera's production of Puccini's *La Bohème* in July 1979. In 1980 she sang the role of Liu in Puccini's *Turandot* in a performance staged in Milan, Italy. Ms. Young recently appeared with Beverly Sills in a celebration for the Year of the Disabled in New York City. In the near future she will sing a New York recital. Ms. Young is a frequent user of the NLS music library.

Shirley How did it happen that you became a singer?

Maureen My singing career began in the most wonderful echo chamber I can imagine—the bathroom. I was about three years old when I discovered that my favorite toy was my voice. I liked the feedback I got from my own sound. Becoming a singer is a life-long process, so I am still in that process. Just having the ability to sing does not make one a singer. There are so many components in your own artistic growth that really influence your sound. Becoming a singer is an everchanging thing.

S. Have you followed a more or less straight route in your singing career?

M. No, my life has never been a straight line. I went to the University of Illinois where I wanted to major in vocal performance, but I was discouraged from doing so because at that time the majority of people in higher education were not interested in encouraging blind people to pursue the arts. That was one problem; the other problem was me. I used to get very shy at auditions so that I did not always sing my best, even though my first love was music. However, I had had a tremendous flair for writing since I was a child. It was not a love, but more an intellectual gift. I pursued a journalistic career and graduated in 1969 from the University of Illinois with a degree in communication. The next ten years were spent building up my savings by working as a journalist, so that I could pursue singing on a full-time basis in New York. I worked primarily in the public relations field. I also hosted a talk show for three years on a Chicago radio station. I produced it, announced it, and did everything except push the buttons to keep it on the air. That experience gave me a certain poise. Being in the business world for ten years gave me a side to my personality that I would not have had otherwise.

S. How long have you lived in New York City?

M. I arrived on Halloween four years ago. I felt just like Baby Doe when I came to New York. [Baby Doe is the lead soprano role in Douglas Moore's contemporary opera *The Ballad of Baby Doe*. Ed.] I moved into a hotel just as she did, and I sat on the floor with all my luggage around me wondering what I was doing there, except I knew that what I was doing—

pursuing my singing—was what I had wanted to do all my life.

S. You are a braille music reader. How do you learn music?

M. I use a combination of methods. The more I advance in my professional singing career, the more important it is to be an absolutely flawless braille music reader. I have not come to that perception easily, because I have always found reading braille music to be tedious. For many years I avoided becoming a very good reader. I now think, however, that the more independent you can be in rehearsal situations the better off you are. A question may come up about the interpretation of a particular phrase, and you may have to justify your particular view to your colleague. The best way to justify a viewpoint is to have a textual reason to back it up: confirm that the music itself indicates it is to be performed in a particular way, or dramatically it is important to do it a certain way, or vocally it is important to do it a certain way. It is always important to have something tangible, to be able to go back to the music and know what the score says. In the professional world of musicianship it makes for better communication and also enables you to find information on the spot as opposed to having to wait for someone to assist you. Even when you do not have your braille score with you, if you have memorized your music from a braille score, you know what that score says. Also, it gives me an inner pulse which, in communicating with conductors, is important since I do not have the eye contact. In my learning process I use a couple of methods. I use braille music, but also I use a pianist—a rehearsal accompanist—to give me a sketch of the piece before I even look at the score. I want to get an overall impression of the patterns or lack of patterns in the particular piece. I listen to recordings of other artists, but only to hear the total harmonic structure of a piece. I also use braille music, so it is really a combination of methods that helps me to get an idea of a piece. But I learn from the braille music itself.

S. Do you always perform from memory?

M. I have so far.

S. So that in an oratorio, customarily performed with the score in hand, you sing from memory?

M. Yes, I have sung from memory because I have never been asked to use my score. If I was asked to use it, I would use it, and it really would not make a big difference. I know there are blind singers who have performed an oratorio reading their music or their words from a braille score. If I were asked to do that, I would. You do what the conductor asks you to do.

S. In the extremely competitive arena of professional music which is overflowing with well-trained, highly talented, and aspiring musicians, you have managed to obtain a number of engagements. How did you do this?

M. I think a career moves forward like a snowball. My ten-year background in public relations helped me. I know how to promote myself. However, the drawback in being your own publicist is that you do not have the objectivity you would if you were promoting somebody else. It also sounds like you are tooting your own horn! But, at

least I know the tactics. For example, I know that it is better to write letters before calling in person.

S. Do you have the time to promote yourself while you are studying?

M. You make the time to do both if you want to have a career. Concerning agents, they are not interested in young singers until they are so successful they almost do not need agents. That goes for the whole field of show business. I have also sung network commercials for radio and television, and my experience was the same in that area: agents were not interested in me until I had completed seventeen network spots. All young musicians and people in show business face this problem with agents. Certainly that I am blind counts. All agents want to know that you are a commodity that can be sold before they get involved with you. I am presently looking for the right agent.

S. What specific difficulties have you encountered in finding an agent who will even think of selling your musical abilities rather than your blindness?

M. I think we have to understand that, like it or not, blindness is part of a package deal. We cannot realistically expect that someone is going to promote us and ignore the blindness, that the musical talent will ever be so great as to overshadow blindness. My blindness is one factor in my own scheme of things. In terms of a sighted person looking at me, it is the number one factor, and I do not think that will ever not be the case. The more comfortable we become in understanding and accepting that, the better it will be. I think it is my responsibility to take blindness and make it as viable a part of the package that I am selling as my talent is. For example, because I am blind I have developed my ability to memorize. You have to make the blindness work for you. The problems you will have with agents are going to be the same problems you will have with any of the general public: getting them to see that blindness is not the pivotal issue, not the reason for your success or the excuse for your failure. It is, rather, a part of who you are.

S. Are there conductors and directors who have preconceived notions about what blind people can or cannot do?

M. When a performer walks into a room for an audition, often people do not speak to you beyond, "Good afternoon" or "What would you like to sing" or "Hello." Because I do not have the eye contact, and time does not permit any real exchange, I cannot see where they are coming from in terms of preconceived notions about blindness. All I can really do is to get up there and sing. My advice is to put yourself together well in terms of blindness being smoothly worked into a whole operating procedure. When you have finished the audition you can probably say, "If there is anything you want to know about how I function as a blind artist, please do not hesitate to ask." It is not like an office where you present yourself in an interview situation.

S. Do you feel you have a heavy responsibility to make the other person feel comfortable with you?

M. I am currently of the opinion that putting other people at ease is less of a burden when you have already put yourself

at ease. I think that is rarely stressed with blind people. Make yourself comfortable with yourself. All of my life I have instead been told to put others at ease; no one thought to tell me to put myself at ease. If you like yourself, other people will become comfortable with you.

S. You have spent lots of time sending letters of introduction to major orchestras, conductors, and organizations that you think might be performing works you can sing effectively. Can you tell me a little more about that?

M. Let me stress that I do not believe that letters should go out until your coaches, your teacher, and you have come to a mutual agreement that you are ready to sing for conductors. You will never be able to erase a negative impression. They will remember you when you are great; they will remember you when you are bad. So make sure that you are at least border-line great before you step into the arena of auditioning. When I was ready to audition for big-name people, I found directories of all the people who conduct symphony orchestras. I then wrote a form letter addressed as an original to each orchestra conductor being considered and included my resumé and reviews.

S. Can you describe the package you sent?

M. My public relations experience helped. I knew how to put together a package. I had my own stationery printed, not the usual black and white, but a pink and very feminine paper. I also waited until I had reviews. The first thing conductors think is, "Can I make money out of this artist?" That is what it comes down to, box office sales. Critics are listened to by the conducting community, so that if you can include reviews it will help. I did not write one letter until I was reviewed in the *Washington Post,* the *New York Times,* and other leading publications.

S. Do most conductors come to New York to audition performers?

M. Yes, that is why most artists live in this city. New York is the Mecca of show business people. There are certainly more pleasant places to survive and probably with a lot less anxiety. But we all come to New York because this is where all the hiring and buying of services takes place. I realized that for me to get the best coaching, the best teacher—everything that is the best—I had to move to New York. But the worst is also here. New York is a city of extremes, but the best of everything is here if you take the time to find it.

S. What did you do after you mailed letters to major conductors?

M. First I waited about a month for a response. I received a lot of what I call the courage letters: "Dear blind artist, you are wonderful. To think that you have no vision, and you have done, etc., etc." Some letters were so beautiful that I kept them. I received a wonderful courage letter from Cellini, for example, that I have never thrown away because I have so much respect for him. His letter was so personal and lovely, not patronizing, but respectful. However, although it is nice to get courage letters, they are not going to buy me a cup of coffee. Other letters said, "I will be in New York on such-and-such a date. Call my office and arrange an appointment or an audition. I will be auditioning between

10 and 12 o'clock, and I can hear sixty-five people, so prepare something short." I followed up on responses like that. I also called people who did not respond, speaking with the secretary to find out if the letter arrived.

S. Did any of those phone calls result in auditions?

M. No. The follow-up cails did not get me auditions. I got auditions from people who read my letter and had a gut response.

S. If another singer were putting together a similar package, would you encourage him or her to go through the expense of phone calls?

M. Yes, I think that is the only way. I once heard a salesperson say that if you make a hundred phone calls and you connect with one, it is worth the effort. It can be a demoralizing experience when you are young and believe you have a talent that could enrich the lives of other people, but you have to sell yourself even when you are well known.

S. Are there other pointers you can pass on to blind singers?

M. I mentioned before that when you walk into an audition you may get only three words from somebody. So I think your appearance is as important as how you sing. Television has brought opera and concerts to the masses, and that is wonderful. But what it has also done is made media stars of people who used to get away with looking like they ate pasta for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Now the trend in the arts is for people to be glamorous. That means getting the package in shape so that you look great even before you open your mouth. You must capture their attention with something besides blindness. If you walk on stage and look good, the conductor will notice. You need to put your wardrobe and makeup together to make a good first impression.

I recently reduced my size from a sixteen to a five. That gave me more choices in my wardrobe. I have certain gowns that I only wear for auditioning. I have my hair styled in such a way that it is very easy for me to do myself; it is very contemporary. Finding the right hairdresser and the right make-up artist is important. Before I go to any audition the first person I see in the morning is the make-up artist that I hire to come to my house to fix my eyes and the rest of my face. I can do my own everyday make-up, but I always have a make-up artist before an audition.

S. Which person should a performer have assist her in making sure that clothes and make-up are perfect—a professional or a highly-regarded friend or family member?

M. A friend or even a family member cannot help you. You need someone who knows something about the business. You are there to sell an image. I hate to say this, because it is not something I am happy about. When you first walk on stage you are selling a picture. So you need someone who knows what the trends are. I remember hearing that Beverly Sills had numerous unsuccessful auditions. She walked in very prim and proper and did not get anywhere. When she started to look very sexy, the conductors began to listen to her voice. You have to have a look.

S. Let us move to another area. Any blind singer who performs opera has to have a bag of tricks for getting around a

stage and locating other singers, props, and so on. What do you do?

M. I find things with the back of my fingernails. If my little finger is extended a little bit I can subtly search for the back of a chair. In *La Bohème* I was fortunate to work with an extremely large teddy-bear of a tenor. When he moved it was like the earth shaking. That was very helpful. Joe could not take a step without my hearing him. There were times, however, when I had to look directly at Joe in the flirtation scenes, especially in Act I. I had to establish at least the illusion of eye contact. We developed what we called "sniffle and snap" cues. Joe would be moving, and I had to know exactly where his face was, so he would sniffle, not very loudly, but just loud enough so that I would have an idea of where he was. The snap was just a snap of the finger. We must remember that this puts some responsibility on sighted artists that they do not bargain for in advance.

S. How did you snap your fingers in this situation?

M. He did. He had a choice. He could sniffle, snap, or pop. We decided that sniffling worked best.

S. Have you ever been on stage alone?

M. I prefer being alone on stage.

S. How do you move around?

M. In Act III of *La Bohème*, I brought my tape recorder to the blocking rehearsal where singers do not sing, but are told where to move and where to stand. I went home and listened to that tape and went through the motions. I used my hotel room in Italy and my own living room in New York to go through the movements, memorizing them as if I were in a new house.

Achieving the ability to make suggestions without offending the fragile ego of the conductor is something else that is very important and difficult to do. I would suggest, for example, that you never make a suggestion during a rehearsal even if you know the "right" way of doing something. Do it his way during a rehearsal no matter how frustrating it might be. There have been moments when I have wanted to walk out because the conductor was making it hard for me. Wait until the guy is sitting down with his cup of coffee or whatever and he is calm, because conductors are never calm when they are putting things together. You can say, "I wonder if we can talk about this or that." Then present your case. You have a better chance of getting through if you catch him at a quiet moment.

There is also a matter of developing a certain amount of patience, which is not necessarily familiar territory to those of us who are blind.

S. Let's talk a little more about communicating with conductors and directors in ways other than eye contact, since that's not available to you.

M. It is amazing how alert your senses become on stage. For example, if you know to listen for the sniffle, you can hear it. Survival becomes the most important issue on stage and it is amazing how your sense of hearing becomes very acute on the stage, blind or sighted. I can hear a conductor breathing from the pit and that helps. Knowing your music, however, is the most important thing, and believe me, if you know your music cold, that is the

greatest thing you can do for yourself and any conductor.

S. What about rehearsals?

M. Know your score. When he goes back to such-and-such phrase or page, you will know where that is.

S. There are those stops and starts. Are these things taken care of?

M. I think so. The main thing is knowing the music. When I did *La Bohème*, some of the singers were not as prepared as others and the conductor wasted more time with them than he ever did with me. If the conductor has to teach you the music and act like a rehearsal accompanist as well, he is not going to want to deal with you. Do as much as possible for yourself, and by yourself, so that you can be as self-sufficient as possible. When you do need help, it will not be as hard to get it.

Braille Music Forum: Reading Intervals

by Bettye Krolick

This month's column is for amateur musicians—individuals of all ages who make music for their own enjoyment. Professional musicians are well-schooled in the understanding and reading of intervals; amateurs may be equally well-trained, or they may be casual readers who sometimes guess at pitches or may shy away from reading because they are not quite sure how to interpret some of the musical symbols. A better understanding of intervals may increase reading skills enough to make reading music more enjoyable.

At the beginning stage, braille notes are easier to learn than print notes. Beginning sighted readers have to deal with unfamiliar symbols placed on a staff, which is a grid of lines and spaces; the meanings of these new symbols change as clef signs change. Braille readers have alphabetic-type characters with which they are already familiar, and the characters remain the same regardless of changing octave or changing clef. Braille readers need to learn seven different symbols for note names; print readers have to learn more than thirty different note-name symbols for the two most common clefs (treble and bass). Every new clef (viola, tenor, etc.) introduces at least fifteen new meanings for these same symbols.

There are some advantages to print music. One is that sighted readers get a pictoral image of the rise and fall of a melody as the notes are placed higher or lower on the staff of five lines. Rising pitches appear to be climbing the steps, rungs, or slats of a fence stretched across the page. As a melody goes down in pitch, it is written lower on the staff, again presenting a pictoral image. Braille notes, in contrast, are written horizontally on a single line. Readers must use their knowledge of melodic intervals to interpret whether a melody rises or falls.

A knowledge of intervals is also necessary in order to read chords in braille. In my opinion, Louis Braille's decision to represent the notes of chords as intervals was a stroke of pure genius. The discovery of this very "musical" feature was the beginning of my love for the braille music code. A number of genuinely musical features in this code prompted me, a sighted, professional musician, to learn braille in order to study this musical system further. That study led to the complication of the *Dictionary of Braille Music Signs*, and it continues unabated as I explore the manner in which different types of music can be represented with a six-dot code.

The purpose of this article is to explain musical intervals as they are notated in braille and to provide assistance in reading both melodic and harmonic intervals in braille music.

Definition

An interval is "the distance between the pitches of two musical tones." [Christine Ammer, *Harper's Dictionnary of Music* (New York: Harper and Row, 1972), p. 162.] This distance is usually a half or a

whole step, the exact size being more specifically called a major, minor, perfect, diminished, etc. interval. While an understanding of these terms enhances a reader's musicianship, it is not necessary for reading and performing braille music accurately.

The alphabetic letter names of notes have a relationship within the scale. C and D are adjacent and form the interval of a second; C and E have one note name between them, so they form a third; C up to F is a fourth; and C down to F is a fifth, etc. To name an interval correctly, count both the top and bottom note names as well as those in between. D-sharp and E-flat are the same pitch when sounded, but C up to D-sharp is a second (an augmented second) and C to E-flat is a third (a minor third). It is the alphabetic name that is the determining factor when reading braille music. Intervals may be written melodically or harmonically, and they may be read up or down. C down to A is a third and C up to A is a sixth when the notes are played consecutively or simultaneously.

Reading Melodic Intervals

In braille, the first note of a melody is preceded by an octave sign. Subsequent notes may or may not have octave signs. If they do, the pitch has been stated completely with both note name and octave. In this case there is no reading problem. When notes are not preceded with octave signs, then it is necessary to understand the rules of transcription in order to know whether the melody rises or falls from one note to the next in braille music. The rules state that intervals of a third or less need not be marked with octave signs, intervals of a sixth or more must always be marked, and intervals of a fourth or fifth must be marked only when the second note enters a new octave. (A new octave always begins with C.) In other words, small melodic leaps will have no octave signs. The performer proceeds up or down whichever direction keeps the interval smaller. For example, B to G will go down, because if it went up, the interval would become a sixth and an octave sign would need to appear before the G.

Signing or playing repeated notes, seconds, and thirds is so natural that it is usually done without even thinking about keeping the interval close. Performing sixths and larger intervals is equally automatic because the octave sign leads the reader to a specific pitch. Fourths and fifths, however, provide an avenue for singing or playing the right note in the wrong octave. As soon as you realize an interval is larger than a third (assuming an octave sign is not present), think of the nearest C and avoid it. For example, A to E must go down. If it went up, it would cross the C that is a third above A. Unmarked fourths or fifths beginning on C, D, or E go up; those beginning on G, A, or B go down. Unmarked fourths from F go up; fifths from F will always be marked with an octave sign.

Reading Chords

In print notation, symbols for notes remain the same when they are parts of a melody or of a chord. In the latter case the notes are aligned vertically on the staff to show that all notes should sound simultaneously.

In braille, the top or bottom note of a chord is written in the usual way with its rhythmic value, and the other members of the chord are presented as intervals from that note. For this purpose each additional member of the chord is written in braille with an interval sign rather than a note name.

Chords may be written to read up or down. The rules given above for reading melodic intervals apply to the notes of the chord that are written in the usual way (as note names). If intervals read up, the written notes of a series of chords form a bass line, and melodic rules govern the rise and fall of that line with its chords. If the chords are written to be read down, the top notes form a melody line that is likewise governed by the melodic rules. The notes within the chords, those written with interval signs, are not affected by the melodic interval rules.

Example 1 shows the seven interval signs in order, beginning with the second and ending with an octave.

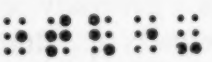
Example 1

Interval signs may be doubled for a succession of four or more and may be preceded by accidental signs for sharps, flats, or naturals.

Intervals of chords are calculated from the written note rather than from the preceding interval, i.e., the note C with a third and then a fifth, reading up, is C-E-G. The fifth is a fifth interval above C, not E. The same chord (C, third, fifth) reading down is C-A-F, and F is a fifth below C.

Intervals proceed in written order. If the same intervals are used, but are written C, fifth, third, the first note above C is G. The second note above C is E, i.e., the E above the G. Similarly, if that chord is read down rather than up, the first note below C is F. The second note is the A below F which will sound a tenth below the written C. Octave signs are only necessary when the distance between two adjacent intervals is more than an octave as shown in example 2. An exception to this rule occurs in the writing of two intervals with the same pitch or note name (a unison or prime). Example 2 also shows a prime, a tenth, and two chords. These should be read down and are explained below.

Example 2

a.


b.

c.

d.

Example 2a shows an augmented prime: fourth octave B with fourth octave B-flat. The sign for an octave interval tells the reader that the note name of the interval is B, and the preceding flat sign lowers that pitch a half step. Dot 5 gives the additional information that the B-flat is to be played in the fourth octave.

In example 2b, the second note is the

interval of a third, D, but the octave sign makes it clear that the D should be played in the fourth octave. This makes an interval of a tenth from the written quarter note, fifth octave F.

Example 2c is a chord easily played on a violin because the bottom two notes are open strings. The top note is fifth octave G. The note a sixth below is fourth octave B. The next interval is a fourth from G which is D, and since it must be below the B, it is fourth octave D. The bottom note is third octave G.

Example 2d would most likely be played on a guitar. The notes are fifth octave E, fifth octave C, fourth octave G, fourth octave E, fourth octave C, and third octave E.

Direction of Intervals

In instrumental music, chords read down in treble instruments and up in bass instruments. When vocal music is written in intervals, women's parts generally read down and men's voice parts up, although some vocal scores are written entirely in four-note chords reading up from the bass. In keyboard music, the left-hand and pedal parts read up, but right-hand parts may read either way. Between 1926 and 1956 right-hand as well as left-hand parts were transcribed in the United States with all intervals up. Some unusual formats also have upward intervals, but all transcriptions since 1956, as well as most European transcriptions before that time, have right-hand parts with the top melody notes written out followed by their chord intervals reading down.

When in doubt about the direction of intervals, you can check them two ways. First look for a transcriber's note of explanation, and then check the in-accords (separate parts of a measure joined with the sign, dots 1-2-6, 3-4-5). Almost without exception, in-accords are written in the same order as the direction of intervals. That is, if the notes before an in-accord sign are higher than those following that sign, in-accords and intervals are written downward. If the notes before an in-accord sign are lower in pitch than those after the sign, intervals as well as in-accords read up.

Read More

If some of the information in this article is news to you, borrow some braille music from NLS to increase your repertoire and add to your enjoyment as an amateur musician. Catalogs are available in braille and large print, and music is loaned for two-month periods. The *Dictionary of Braille Music Signs* may be requested so you can locate any braille signs you do not recognize.

Questions and comments are welcome. Address them to Bettye Krolick, 602 Ventura Road, Champaign, IL 61820.

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Braille

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Praktische Orgelschule (Selections)
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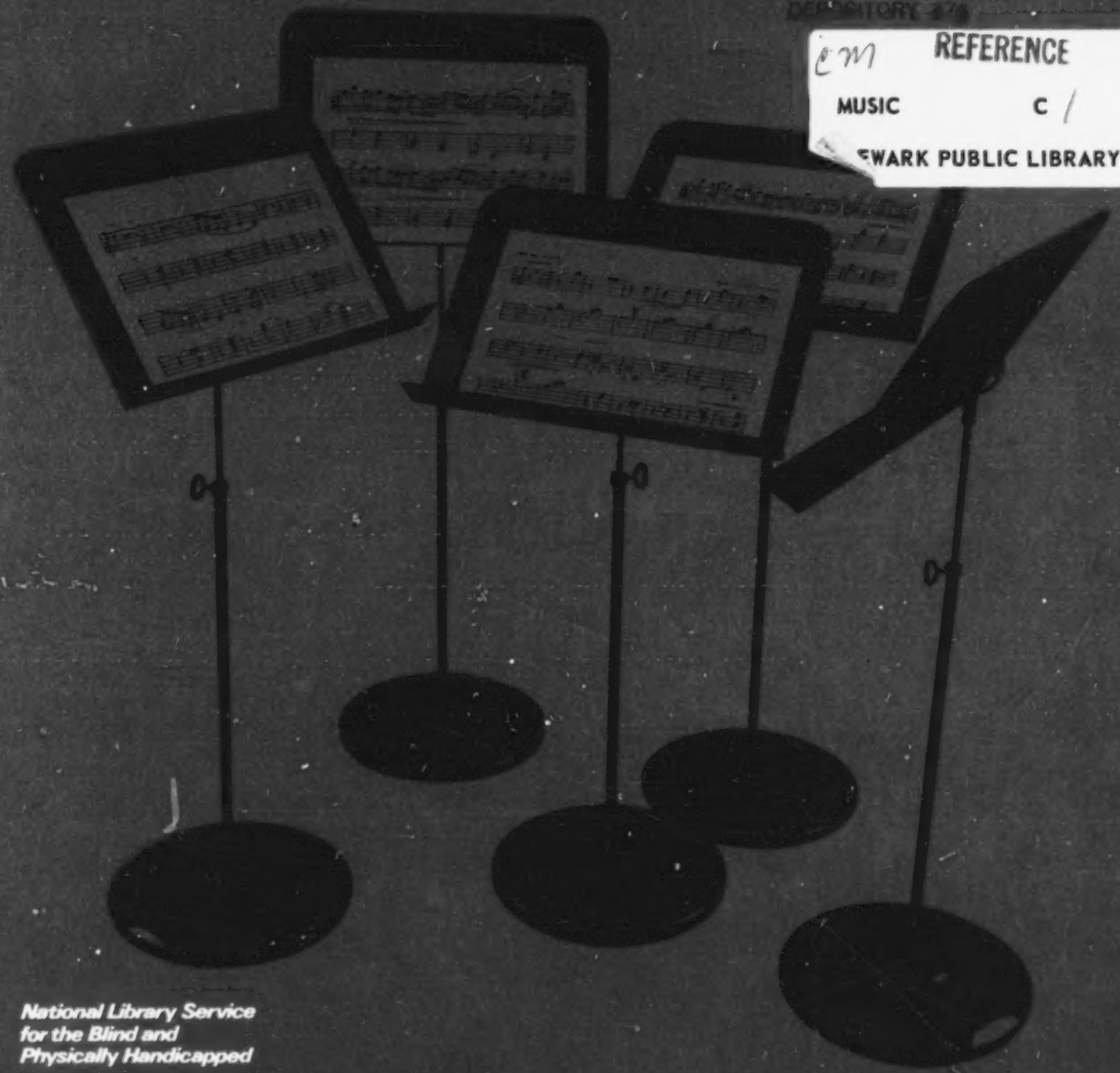

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The Musical Mainstream

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Announcement

Texaco-Metropolitan Opera Radio Broadcasts: 1982 -83 Season

Date	Opera	On-Air (Eastern Time)	Off-Air (Eastern Time)	Last Broadcast
1982				
Nov. 27	The Met Marathon (Special Program)[1]	2:00	6:00	———
Dec. 4	Lucia di Lammermoor (Donizetti)	2:00	5:10	Jan. 15, 1977
Dec. 11	Parade	1:30	4:20	Feb. 28, 1981
	—Parade (Satie)			
	—Les Mamelles de Tirésias (Poulenc)			
	—L'Enfant et les Sortilèges (Ravel)			
Dec. 18	Macbeth (Verdi)[2]	2:00	5:55	Feb. 3, 1973
Dec. 25	Hansel and Gretel (Humperdinck)	2:00	4:20	Jan. 9, 1982
1983				
Jan. 1	Tannhäuser (Wagner)	1:00	5:15	Jan. 30, 1982
Jan. 8	Il Trovatore (Verdi)	2:00	5:40	Feb. 6, 1982
Jan. 15	Idomeneo (Mozart)[2]	2:00	5:20	First broadcast
Jan. 22	Pelléas et Mélisande (Debussy)	2:00	5:45	Mar. 4, 1978
Jan. 29	Boris Godunov (Mussorgsky)	1:30	5:25	Feb. 25, 1978
Feb. 5	Les Contes d'Hoffmann (Offenbach)	1:30	5:10	Mar. 27, 1982
Feb. 12	La Gioconda (Ponchielli)	1:00	5:00	Jan. 5, 1980
Feb. 19	Un Ballo in Maschera (Verdi)	2:00	5:25	Feb. 14, 1981
Feb. 26	Adriana Lecouvreur (Cilea)	2:00	5:45	Feb. 11, 1978
Mar. 5	Arabella (Strauss)[2]	2:00	5:15	Dec. 18, 1965
Mar. 12	La Bohème (Puccini)	1:00	4:05	Jan. 16, 1982
Mar. 19	Der Rosenkavalier (Strauss)	1:30	5:50	Jan. 12, 1980
Mar. 26	Don Carlo (Verdi)	1:00	5:45	Mar. 15, 1980
Apr. 2	Die Walküre (Wagner)	1:00	5:45	Feb. 19, 1977
Apr. 9	Il Barbiere di Siviglia (Rossini)	2:00	5:15	Mar. 13, 1982
Apr. 16	Parsifal (Wagner)	12:30	5:55	Apr. 17, 1982

[1]The Met Marathon will be a fundraising event on commercial stations only; a special program is being prepared for the noncommercial stations which will not have fundraising.

[2]New production; off-air times approximate.

Selected Reprints

Leonard Slatkin: The Driving Spirit of Saint Louis

by Roy Hemming
Ovation
July 1982

At 37, Leonard Slatkin is not only one of the youngest music directors of a major American symphony orchestra (the Saint Louis Symphony Orchestra) but also one of the few who's both American-born and American-trained—at a time when a number of critics have openly questioned the fact that so few native sons seem to be "making it" to the top.

There's no question, however, that Leonard Slatkin is making it. In addition to a heavy schedule in Saint Louis, the sandy-haired, slightly stocky, warmly affable young conductor is in demand as a guest with virtually all the major orchestras in both the United States and Europe. Last summer he made headlines with a conducting "first"—leading the Mostly Mozart Orchestra in the first U.S. performances of Mozart's recently discovered Symphony in F, K. 19a (believed to date from Mozart's ninth year). One of Slatkin's performances of the symphony took place on the White House lawn in Washington at the invitation of President and Mrs. Reagan. A few days later he led it again before a large crowd at a free outdoor concert in New York's Lincoln Center Plaza.

Roy Hemming, a contributing music editor of *Ovation*, also produces and writes the commentary for the weekly New York Philharmonic radio broadcasts. © 1982 by *Ovation*. All rights reserved. Used with permission.

Just a few years ago Slatkin was quoted as dreaming of achieving another "first"—to be the first American to conduct all of the so-called "Big Five" orchestras in one year: the Boston Symphony, the Chicago Symphony, the Cleveland Orchestra, the New York Philharmonic, and the Philadelphia Orchestra. Then, as he himself puts it: "Bang! It happened—out of nowhere!"

Well, not exactly out of nowhere. As Slatkin recalled it over a weight-conscious chef's salad in New York, he was scheduled with four of the orchestras in 1980 when, unexpectedly, the New York Philharmonic called. Could he fill in for a conductor who had been forced to cancel? A few months later, with that Philharmonic concert, Slatkin's dream had come true. "I can't believe someone else didn't do it somewhere along the line," he said. "But I'm told I'm the first. It was one of those great things that, to be perfectly honest, I'm not sure I'd want to do again. It's a lot of pressure. I had to do some programs with minimal rehearsal time and, in at least one case, with total unfamiliarity with the hall itself. That can be murder when you're not sure what you're really hearing from the podium."

Slatkin came away from the experience with some impressions he hadn't anticipated about the comparative qualities of the orchestras themselves. "What made it really interesting to me," he commented, "was their divergence of musical personalities. Each orchestra is really unique. And perhaps most surprisingly, I came away with the feeling that some of our so-called secondary orchestras have equally strong personalities and qualities as well—that they stack up quite favorably in many cases with the top ones.

"Don't misunderstand me," he interjected quickly. "I'm not saying the Top Five aren't in a class by themselves. Indeed they are. What I'm saying is that in the past twenty to thirty years the so-called second-level orchestras have gotten better and better, so that the gap between them and the Top Five isn't what it used to be. Not so long ago, it used to be just the Top Three (Boston, New York, Philadelphia). Then that got extended by Chicago and Cleveland to the Top Five. I think it's already six or seven—and it may soon be the Top Ten."

Slatkin speaks from experience that to date includes several years as Principal Guest Conductor of the Minnesota Orchestra, two years (1977–1979) as music director of the New Orleans Symphony, several as director of Chicago's Grant Park concerts, and Music Director of the Saint Louis Symphony since 1979. This summer, in addition to conducting at Grant Park and Aspen, Slatkin has taken the Minnesota to Miami's New World Festival, and from July 27 to August 14 will once again serve as conductor and artistic director for the orchestra's annual Sommerfest in Minneapolis.

"You know," he continued, "you find less movement among the players from one orchestra to another than you used to. For the most part, the key players—the ones you rely on—stay. Fifteen or twenty years ago a player came to Saint Louis with the idea that he or she would just use the position to get someplace else—as a stepping-stone. There's much less of that today. It has a lot to do with better conditions within these orchestras today, and with their getting more prestige nationwide through radio broadcasts, television and, in some cases, recordings.

"Working simultaneously with this is the fact that positions in the Big Five aren't as readily available because retirement ages have either been extended or abandoned. So when an opening does come along, a player in a second-level orchestra is likely to say, 'You know, I've been here ten to fifteen years, it's going well, my salary is good'—in many cases commensurate with players in larger orchestras—'and I like the community, so I'll stay.' "

But, I asked, don't the longer seasons and greater stability also lead to boredom on the part of some musicians? "Yes," Slatkin shot back without ducking the question, "I think they do get bored and restless. I think many players are regretting this forty-eight- or fifty-two-week season as it's developed in the past decade or so. Not economically, mind you, but in other ways. There's so much to do, so much music to play, even if you have six- to eight-week vacations each year. I think the longer season works best when you can split up the orchestra into chamber groups or a pops group for completely different repertories.

"There's another factor in closing the gap between the Big Five and the next level," he said. "I know it's a sensitive one, but it has to be faced. That's the fact that as the orchestras' seasons get longer and longer, the music directors of the Big Five conduct a smaller percentage of the season—in some cases only ten to thirteen weeks. In Saint Louis I do between eighteen and twenty weeks, and it's similar elsewhere. There's more musical stability to the direction of some of the secondary orchestras, a greater chance to develop their own personality and to improve overall performance quality.

"Of course, some people will say that

the Big Five orchestras may not need that kind of tenure from a music director," Slatkin admitted. "In Chicago, for example, [Sir Georg] Solti does only a dozen weeks, yet the orchestra survives just fine—and he's certainly gotten the orchestra to an enviable point in world stature. But I'm not sure how long it can last. Also, take Philadelphia. I think it will be interesting to see what happens now that [Eugene] Ormandy has retired and [Riccardo] Muti has become music director on a more limited schedule. Muti is still holding posts with the Philharmonia in London and the Maggio Musicale in Florence. After two music directors, Stokowski and Ormandy, who gave the Philadelphia Orchestra virtually all their time for some sixty years, it's got to be a massive change for the orchestra.

"And, you know, [Seiji] Ozawa has been criticized heavily in Boston for his out-of-town schedule, so that he's now said he's going to spend more time there. And Zubin Mehta was criticized two years ago for not being in New York for the opening of the Philharmonic's season, because of a prior commitment. The point is that you would never find that happening with a music director of a secondary orchestra, not being there to open the season. I think all these factors, added together, have had a lot to do with the very dramatic change that's making our secondary orchestras not secondary any more."

Our conversation turned to the criticism that keeps popping up about so few American-born conductors being in charge of major American orchestras. "I used to feel not so far away from what those critics thought," Slatkin replied without hesitation. "But then I reexamined it. Every community, every orchestra has its own wants and needs, its own standards. There are certainly a lot of qualified Americans around to fill the jobs, but I'm not sure anymore that nationality should be a priority in picking a music director. Do you know that in London right now there's not one native British head of a major British orchestra? Rozhdestvensky [a Russian] has the BBC Symphony, Abbado [an Italian] has the London Symphony, Solti [born in Hungary] has the London Philharmonic, and Walter Weller [an Austrian] has the Royal Philharmonic. Abbado also heads the Vienna Philharmonic. In France, Barenboim [born in Argentina] and Maazel [born in Paris of American parents and raised in the United States] head the two major Paris orchestras. And in Rotterdam an American, James Conlon, has been named to replace another American, David Zinman. So I think each and every orchestra has a right to look at musical qualifications first—and the kind of image it wants to project—and forget about nationality. Of course, if all three can merge in one conductor, then fine."

But, I asked, how does he feel when somebody of a comparable age to himself and from another country is given a major American post? Slatkin paused for a moment before replying. "I have to admit I'm a little bothered by it. There certainly are qualified Americans—and at least two cases of fairly recent appointments might just as well have gone to an American on merit. In one case, I believe a recording contract had something to do with the choice of a European—and as orchestra budgets go up and up and up, there's a limit to how much you can increase ticket prices or get from your subscribers, and so

you have to make up the money in records if you can."

Slatkin makes it clear, however, that he's talking about his disappointment with regard to other American conductors, not himself. Yes, he knows his name was raised in speculation as a possible successor to Lorin Maazel in Cleveland (Germany's Christoph von Dohnanyi got the post). "My name was in there and I couldn't believe it," he commented. "It was just one of those rumor things. They never actually approached me. I'm happy where I am, so I would have stayed anyway. I know I've done a lot in a short time, but there is still so much to do. I would like to stabilize for a while now—I really would. I'd like to develop and refine whatever skills I've acquired up to now, and build on them.

"The worst thing anybody can do in music is to go too fast. We've seen it too often in this business—going so fast that you don't have the time to grow and develop. That's why I limit my repertory. It's not that I couldn't play certain works that other young conductors are doing, but I prefer to build a little slower than that. I want to leave something for the future. I don't want to get to be fifty-five or sixty having gone through all the Mahlers, all this, all that, with nothing to do but rerecord them again. There are so many other things to be explored. So I think I'd like to stay a little quieter for a while."

Does that mean staying in Saint Louis for any specific time-span? "Yes," Slatkin replied. "To stay effective as a music director, you have to stay about ten years—and no longer than fifteen these days. By fifteen years you've gone through the standard repertory five times, and you just don't want to get people bored. As much as I admire long-term music directors such as Ormandy—and I love that man—I don't want my orchestra to get to the point where the players say, 'OK, we're doing this piece again and we know how he does it, so here we go again.' When that happens, it's time to move."

But Slatkin sees himself as being far from that point in Saint Louis. In fact, he sees the challenge of the next few years in terms of consolidating and extending the status of the Saint Louis Symphony itself. "I'm bound and determined that Saint Louis be recognized as one of the great American orchestras. We're at that stage where I believe it can happen. We're recording for Telarc in its new digital process, which I think is the best of them all. We're videotaping programs for the Bravo cable service. The album of Rachmaninoff symphonies we did for Vox won a Grammy nomination. So things are happening." That set has recently been followed up by a four-record set of Rachmaninoff's other orchestral music, on the Vox Cum Laude label.

Achieving success in Saint Louis has further significance for Slatkin. His father, Felix Slatkin, was born in Saint Louis, then moved to California where Leonard was born in 1944. In some ways, the shadow of his father's musical career, as well as that of other members of his family, has played an intermittent role in Leonard Slatkin's musical development. Felix Slatkin was for many years the music director of the Hollywood Bowl, a major conductor-arranger for the Hollywood studios, and a violinist in one of the West Coast's most prestigious string quartets. Moreover, Leonard's mother is Eleanor Aller, a well-known cellist in her own

right, and his uncle the pianist Victor Aller.

"It goes back even further," Slatkin noted, "to my great aunt and great uncle, who founded something called the Russian Symphony Society in New York in the early 1900s. It existed, I think, until about 1920. Anyway, the heritage is all over the family. I know of only one uncle who was tone deaf. He became a lawyer."

Still, his family did not push young Leonard into music. "I began studying piano when I was about three," he recalled, "and I certainly absorbed a lot of music just by being around the house. My father would be working out arrangements with Frank Sinatra one day, and rehearsing the next day for a quartet recording. But I didn't think seriously about a music career for myself until much later. I do remember one time, though, when I was about 13, when, like most kids I guess, I simply wanted to go out and play ball. My mother said very simply to me: 'If you go out there and don't finish your practicing, we're going to lock up the piano.' I didn't believe her and went out and played ball. When I came back, sure enough the piano was locked. So I said OK, that's that—and I spent the next three or four days playing ball. Finally, I came back crying. I just had to have the piano back. My parents said, very quietly, that if I seriously wanted to be a musician I'd have to learn to give up some of the things other kids did.

"I'd say the real decision to become a musician came right after my father died, in 1963," Slatkin continued. "He was 47 at the time, and I was only 19. Actually, I'd turned away from music for a while, and had gone to college as an English major. But when my father died, I returned to L.A. Maybe it was the fact that both my father and grandfather died within a week of each other—suddenly I knew I had to stay in music."

Was the fact that he came from a family of well-known musicians a plus or a minus at that time? "A plus," Slatkin replied matter-of-factly. "But it has to be remembered that although my father was very well known among musicians, he wasn't among the general public. So I never had the kind of pressure on me that some other people have had because they were the sons of famous parents. I was lucky in that respect. I had other problems trying to discover my own relationship with my father, because with the quartet rehearsing or his being way on tour or off in the studios at all hours of the day and night, I never really got to know him when I was growing up. It was only after he died that I realized what an important influence he'd been on me—and that I started to develop my own musical personality. It took me many years to discover and understand that."

Ironically, Leonard Slatkin's "big break" as a musician on his own came not in his hometown of Los Angeles but in his father's, Saint Louis. But it had no relation whatsoever to his father. Instead, it came from Walter Susskind, with whom Slatkin studied at Aspen for three summers.

"Susskind kind of took over when my father died," Slatkin said. "He became my mentor. At Aspen, I used to pick him up and drive him to rehearsals because he didn't drive. One day in 1968, when I arrived at his house, he asked me to come in for a few minutes and introduced me to the Executive Director of the Saint Louis Symphony. Susskind had just been named

Music Director of the orchestra, but I didn't think anything more of the introduction in terms of myself. It wasn't until some weeks later that Susskind asked me if I'd like to be his assistant in Saint Louis. He said that I'd made a very favorable impression on the Executive Director and that he'd okayed my being offered the assistantship. At first I didn't know what to do. I hadn't completed my Master's, and there was the draft to worry about.

"Looking back, I was so naive about the whole thing. I called several friends, who said 'Take it. Run. Do it!' They had to pound it into me that school, at least in the performing arts, is important only until you get that job, that there's nothing that says you're a better musician just because you have a degree. So that's how I came to Saint Louis. Oh, a postscript: A month after I got there, I got called for my draft physical. I went in and fainted in the middle of my physical! I guess I got so scared that my blood pressure went up—and out I went. Uncle Sam said he didn't want me, and I've never been more grateful."

Over the next twelve years, Slatkin progressed from Assistant Conductor to Associate Conductor, then Associate Principal Conductor, and then Principal Guest Conductor. "Either they or I did something to try to keep me around for a while," he said, smiling. Then, in 1978, upon the resignation of Jerzy Semkow as music director, Slatkin was chosen for the top post, joining the select few who have risen "through the ranks" to become music director of a major American orchestra.

To some extent, like Andre Previn before him, Slatkin has had to battle a "Hollywood image" that's lingered because of the fact that Leonard Slatkin himself (like Previn) played jazz piano in Los Angeles during his teen years (including an impromptu session once at Shelly's Manne Hole with Miles Davis). Later he worked as a radio disc jockey for three years, playing all kinds of music other than classical. But he steadfastly refuses to consider this a liability for a classical career. Instead, he believes that Previn's years of work in the movie studios and in jazz, as well as Leonard Bernstein's work on Broadway and in television, have proven that "the more background a conductor has in different kinds of music, the better he can serve today in the function of music director.

"Orchestras no longer limit themselves to one or two kinds of music," Slatkin noted, "and it's the conductor who's on top of many facets who'll be the most creative music director. Sometimes when I walk out on stage, I think that there must be people sitting at home watching television who would really enjoy the program I'm about to conduct. I wonder how I can reach them. And sometimes I do reach back to my Hollywood background to come up with program ideas or devices to make audiences interested in what we're doing. We're in competition. And those of us who grew up with diverse and really well-versed backgrounds have a big advantage.

"I think that's a reason you're beginning to see a few orchestras where, although there's a conductor who has the title of Music Director, there's another person in the administrative end who actually is also running musical matters—making artistic decisions in concert with the music director, sometimes even without his advice, because of areas the music director doesn't know about."

One realizes quickly from talking with

Leonard Slatkin that that won't happen where he's concerned, because he takes such a personal and knowledgeable interest in all the activities of his orchestra, including its commissioning of new scores (most recently from David del Tredici, Joseph Schwantner, and John Williams), its digital recordings (more for Telarc than any other American orchestra), its radio broadcast series, its television appearances, and its prospects for making videodiscs or videocassettes in the future.

"I'm very young to have an orchestra like Saint Louis," he observed in a proud but most unboastful way. "I'm very young for this kind of thing. But I intend to make the most of it—for all of us."

Odyssey to Opera

by Kenneth Lofane
Opera News
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Amid the flood of confusion about music being composed now, two things at least are clear: tonality is struggling to be reborn, and style has become the composer's obsession. Listeners to new music are presented with everything from the baby-simple minimalism of Philip Glass to the high-tech virtuosity of John Corigliano. In newspaper reviews, labeling a new composer's style has become a game, like naming a lipstick color after an obscure flower. Yet behind the panoply of names is a single recurrent urge, the desire to reforge tonal chains broken by decades of serialism and aleatorism.

No career better exemplifies the problems of style and tonality than that of the sixty-three-year-old Philadelphia composer George Rochberg. When he began his composing career, in the late 1940s, his style reflected the influence of such early-twentieth-century masters as Bartók and Stravinsky. In 1952 Rochberg's *Bagatelles* for piano declared their composer a serialist. Rochberg turned again to tonality in the mid-1960s, with wildly eclectic works like *Music for the Magic Theatre*. But it was tonality with a difference—disillusioned tonality, encrusted with serialism and dotted with literal quotations from, and allusions to, composers from centuries past. This style matured in the 1970s and produced the String Quartets Nos. 3 through 7, for which Rochberg is best known today.

This last change has made Rochberg controversial. The string quartets have won warm praise from some for their bold lyricism, disdain from others for seeming like a set of stylistic index cards. The quartets were a theater for Rochberg's battle of style.

Will opera be to Rochberg in the 1980s what the quartet was to him in the 1970s? For the past three years, Rochberg and his librettist wife, Gene, have been working on *The Confidence Man,* a full-length opera based on the novel by Herman Melville, commissioned by the Santa Fe Opera. The composer's first opera, it has its premiere this month. A while back, the Rochbergs talked about *The Confidence Man,* and about style, at their Newtown Square home.

"The selection of *The Confidence Man* as George's first opera was one of those large intuitive acts," Mrs. Rochberg said. "It was so right for us. I was in our daughter Chessie's room and saw a copy of the novel. I used to be an English teacher, but I had never read the work. Immediately, the language struck me as a vehicle for song and delivery, in an operatic sense."

She also had a strong feeling that Melville and Rochberg were in artistic affinity. "Critics have mentioned George's skill as an allusionist," she noted. "Melville was known as a literary allusionist *(The Confidence Man* contains sly references to Greek mythology, Shakespeare, and the Bible). My husband is of the conviction that the materials of an artist are anything he wants to use and can use with meaning. Somehow Melville was doing this same

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thing. I knew I had the right author for the composer."

But a novel, even one in tune with the composer's talents, does not necessarily make for good opera. Not everyone saw in *The Confidence Man* the potential for opera that Gene Rochberg saw. "A number of friends heard about this project," she said. "They read the novel and told me I was crazy." One who did not think her crazy was George Rochberg. *The Confidence Man*, an ironic, darkly humorous book, appealed to the composer.

"That this is a comic opera has a lot to do with my current state of mind," Rochberg said. "One of the things I really abominate is the total grimness of most contemporary efforts. I am tired to death of this sophomoric philosophy that the composer must deal with only the bleakest aspects of life."

Once composer and librettist were agreed on adapting Melville's only dark comedy, there remained the gargantuan task of hammering narrative prose into singable dialogue. *The Confidence Man* is less a novel than a suite of eight fables, in which the title character takes on numerous guises during an 1850s riverboat cruise. In the fables, the Confidence Man, or one of his avatars, repeatedly dupes unwary innocents with his talk of goodness, charity and altruism. To the Rochbergs, there is a metaphysics in this, a contrast of two world views—the Confidence Man's bright view and the dark or sober view of his victims.

Says Rochberg, "We've tried to suggest that what Melville was talking about was the American Dream. They didn't have the phrase for it in the 1850s, but that is what the optimism of the time was about—the bright view. Today we've reached the sober view."

The bright past of America and its sober present—the collaborators had found a serious theme for their comic opera. But they hadn't yet found a structure. The novel was an awkward series of vignettes. "The first thing we did," Rochberg remembered, "was to take the action off the boat. I didn't want to write a sort of picaresque opera where you just float from one tableau to another."

How to tighten the story line while retaining the meat of Melville's fables became the central challenge for Gene. Her answer: expand on one fable and incorporate elements of others. "I took the story of China Aster, a deceptively simple story of an innocent who gets drawn into problems and becomes educated and wised-up," Mrs Rochberg explained. "I used this story as a scrim through which I drew all the pertinent things Melville had to say."

This approach dwindled the actual role of the Confidence Man to that of *deus ex machina*. His eight embodiments shrank to four, and the only time the title character is onstage with China Aster, the opera's real protagonist, is in an early scene of exposition. There are other differences. In the novel, China Aster's wife is only mentioned; in the opera, she is a major character. "We've made a love story of their relationship," says Rochberg.

The Rochbergs found the making of an opera a learning experience, an education in the difference between spoken dramatic dialogue and dramatic dialogue meant for singing. "In order to express an emotion verbally," Rochberg notes, "you have to qualify it, round it out, use words. Well, that's not true of musical expression. What you need are implications, in which the words are realized in the music."

If opera demands special verbal expres-

sion, it also demands special musical expression: "There has to be a special quality to music written for people to sing as they move onstage. What does a composer ask a singer to sing? You know very well that you can string notes together and the singer will sing them mechanically. But the composer has really the responsibility to write tunes. If a line has no motivic shape, no inflection, you don't have a tune. If the inflection and shape are there, a tune is there."

Strongly tonal talk coming from one of the first American-born composers to write in a twelve-tone idiom. But Rochberg insists his celebrated—and sometimes berated—style changes have been surface changes only: "Underneath, I've always been the same. All my gestures are essentially the same. I think I have a reasonably wide vocabulary of gestures, but from the beginning there have been recognizable similarities from piece to piece.

"Style per se was never really the question. Sure, when I stumbled onto Schoenberg, it was like a tremendous tidal wave. You don't like to have an experience like that, but when you do, you have to do something about it. I had to have the twelve-tone experience, and then it had to end. No matter what I've done, I've never changed my basic aim—to make music and sing."

If Rochberg's change to dodecaphony was brought about by purely musical incidents, his move away from it was brought about by personal tragedy. In 1964 the Rochbergs' son, Paul, a talented poet, died at the age of twenty. On the record jacket for *Contra Mortem et Tempus*, the first composition Rochberg penned after his son's death, the composer announced that the twelve-tone idiom had proven a dry well for the expression of his grief.

When Rochberg first tackled the theoretical challenges of Schoenberg in 1952, he was virtually alone in America. Among major composers, only Stravinsky had begun experimenting with serialism, and of this Rochberg was unaware until 1955. When quotations from earlier tonal composers occurred to Rochberg as a way of finding a path back to tonal expression ("I picked up the suggestion of quotations from Ives," he confesses), he was equally unaware that other composers were beginning to employ quotations. It was as if something in the air moved a small body of composers to embrace the same ideas independently.

Perhaps not incidentally, the return to tonality stirred in Rochberg the desire to compose for the theater. His first project was an adaptation of Paul's *Silver Talons*, a project still awaiting completion. Then came the proposed adaptation of a major novel for the opera stage. But this was interrupted by problems with the novelist's estate. One day Gene Rochberg wandered into her daughter's room and *The Confidence Man*. That's where we came in.

Why has a composer for whom lyrical elements are so essential—critics have even spotted lyric/tonal elements in austerely serial works like Rochberg's Chamber Symphony (1953)—waited so long for a first opera? "The idea of waiting has to do with a kind of discipline, a sense of the right moment. I've written songs, I think now close to seventy—by Schubert's standard, not a very large output. But my very first serious efforts, when I was seventeen and began to realize I was a composer, were songs."

Rochberg is used to waiting for musical

readiness. His youthful training was cut short by service in World War II. He went into the army a student of twenty-three and came out at twenty-seven feeling as if "a large chunk of my life had been swallowed up. The compensating pressure when I started back to work was almost obsessive. I worked twelve, fourteen hours a day. It was more than making up for lost time—there was a sense that it had to be now or I would never do it."

Before the war, Rochberg had studied with Hans Weisse at the Mannes School in New York. After the war, Weisse having died meanwhile, Rochberg talked with Leopold Mannes about a new teacher. Weisse had been a teacher "of the old traditions," in Rochberg's words, and the young composer was looking for someone to continue in that vein. He chose Rosario Scalero, who was also teacher to Samuel Barber and Gian Carlo Menotti.

"When I heard about Scalero, I said to myself, 'That's the teacher I want.' Scalero was a craftsman—I wanted to be a craftsman. No matter what would happen to the music I was to write, I wanted to be guided through by a kind of Vergil. That's what Scalero was."

Craftsmanship became the sword and buckler for Rochberg's career. Throughout the surface changes of style, the emphasis on the shaping and sculpting of phrases and forms has remained constant. The composer takes a dim view of art without the foundation of craft: "I think the twentieth century has stumbled badly on this self-indulgent idea that somehow you can make art without craft. It's never been true, because craftsmanship is in the nature of art, not the nature of a particular time. Just because circumstances change doesn't mean the essence of things does."

What is the score for *The Confidence Man* like? "No quotations," Rochberg says firmly. Allusions yes, direct quotations no. One element Rochberg says is in the forefront is an as yet untapped source of the composer's musical experience, American popular music. "I wrote pop songs under a pseudonym in the 1930s," Rochberg recalls, "and Gene is a walking repository of lyrics from the 1930s and 1940s."

Of opera influences, Rochberg cites Mozart–Rossini–Verdi as his preference over Wagner–Strauss–Berg. He has not been impressed with the musico-theatric efforts of other living composers and believes one of the primary responsibilities today is making opera enjoyable again. "Opera should be neither a test of endurance nor of tolerance," he says. "It should be a positive experience between performer and audience."

The Confidence Man is a fundamentally tonal score. Fifteen years ago, when Rochberg was engineering his return to tonality, a tonal score from a major composer would have sent shock waves through the musical community. Today, due partly to Rochberg's tonal-atonal experiments in the 1960s, it is more expected. It's been a long journey, like the story of the seafarer who sailed for weeks only to beach in his back yard. It was an odyssey with a moral.

"It took a long time, but I realized finally several years back that, if I had to characterize tonality—apart from its stylistic evolution, which is the musicologist's way of looking at it—I would say it's the most stable musical language we have devised, which has undergone the most surface changes. If you look at music from Monteverdi to Schoenberg, you see that the

language allows for broad expression. To say that baroque tonal music is essentially the same as Haydn or Mozart is silly, but the vocabulary is the same. And it's still the same when you get to Wagner. He uses the same words, though he extends them.

"The old question of whether the tonal language is merely a cultural tradition or in the nature of sound, the old nature-versus-nurture question that anthropologists always raise, applies here. And I think it's nature. Tonality is that passion in us to make connections between musical events."

That passion has been undercut for much of the century. Like the World Controller in *Brave New World,* academic forces in music have put concepts like "purpose" and "connection" on the index. In their place, we have been given the rhetoric of serialism, which proclaimed objective and impersonal control of music, and that of aleatorism, which trumpeted random sound for its own sake. For a long time, these two were proffered as opposites, but the clarity of hindsight shows them to have been twins. Each merely varied a single theme, the composer's refusal to deal with personal expression in the language of tonality.

If *The Confidence Man* has anything to say beyond its portrait of the American experience, it is that music is a matter not of rhetoric but of vision.

The Songs of Gabriel Fauré

by James Elson
NATS Bulletin
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"To come to Fauré (1845–1924) in the history of French song is to enter the promised land," Hall (1953) has written. Although Fauré grew up in a France saturated with German Romanticism, he remained virtually untouched by it. Fauré has been compared to Schumann (Suckling 1951) and Brahms (Copland 1924)—to the former because of his lyricism; to the latter because of his classical restraint—but his art remains unmistakably French.

Fauré was born in Pamiers in the south of France. His father, a provincial inspector of primary schools, recognized his son's unusual musical gifts and sent him at the age of nine to study at the École Niedermeyer in Paris. The Niedermeyer School's curriculum placed particular emphasis on church music, in contrast to the Paris Conservatoire, where opera dominated. Fauré's studies in modal harmonization of plainsong were to considerably influence his later compositions.

In 1860 Camille Saint-Saëns joined the Niedermeyer faculty as professor of piano. Although only ten years older than Fauré, Saint-Saëns was well on his way to a brilliant career as composer and virtuoso pianist. A friendship quickly formed which was to last more than sixty years. At several critical junctures in his career Fauré would be indebted to Saint-Saëns for extending a helping hand.

After completing his studies in 1865, Fauré became the church organist in the town of Rennes in Brittany. Through Saint-Saëns he also served as accompanist to the noted soprano Mme. Miolan-Carvalho during her concert tours in Brittany (Pennington 1974–75). His first song, "Le papillon et la fleur," which she sang with great success, was dedicated to her.

At least three of Fauré's published songs date from his student days. Their texts are by Victor Hugo, and include, in addition to "le papillon et la fleur," "Mai" and "Rêve d'amour." Attractive, if slight, they are written in the tradition of the *romance*, the prevailing song form of the day, closely tied in its naturalness and simplicity to popular styles. From these modest beginnings, Fauré and his friend Henri Duparc developed the French counterpart to the German *Lied*, the *mélodie* (Pennington).

After moving to Rennes, Fauré continued setting Victor Hugo's verse. "Dans les ruines d'une abbaye," in which the poem's two lovers are revealed in the last stanza to be birds, is one of Fauré's most charming songs.

Fauré's return to Paris from Brittany in 1870 was not entirely voluntary. According to Suckling, Fauré was asked to leave his church position when he appeared in the organ loft on a Sunday morning still attired in his Saturday night evening dress. It was

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shortly thereafter that he joined the teaching staff of the École Niedermeyer, while continuing his work as an organist and choirmaster.

"Lydia" is perhaps Fauré's finest song of the early 1870s. It is his first setting of the Parnassian poet Leconte de Lisle. The so-called Parnassians were a group of young poets who rejected the excesses of Romanticism and strove to return to Classical formalism and restraint (Meister 1980). Beginning the melody of "Lydia" in the Lydian mode is not only appropriate to the spirit of the text, but also a pun on the title. The prominent use of the melodic interval of the tritone was to occur frequently in subsequent compositions.

Three *mélodies* to the poetry of Charles Baudelaire ("Hymne," "La rançon," and "Chant d'automne") were not particularly successful. Noske (1970) has attributed this to Fauré's attempt to borrow from Schumann, perhaps seeking to achieve for Baudelaire in song what Schumann did for Heine. The spiritual malaise of Baudelaire's *Fleur du mal* did not prove congenial to Fauré, and he never set the poet again.

The verses of Théophile Gautier yielded better results. Upon his return to Paris, Fauré formed a close friendship with the composer Edouard Lalo and his wife (Pennington). Mme. Lalo possessed a fine contralto voice, and Fauré dedicated two of his Gautier *mélodies* to her: "Les matelots," a paean to the sea, and "Tristesse," whose charm lies in the fact that neither the poet nor the composer took an attack of "frightful sadness" too seriously. Mme. Lalo was also the first performer of another Gautier setting, "La chanson du pêcheur: Lamento."

Through Saint-Saëns, Fauré was introduced to the musical circle of the Viardot family in 1872. Pauline Viardot-Garcia, a celebrated singer and creator of roles in operas by Meyerbeer and Gounod, was the sister of the famous diva, Maria Malibran, and the renowned teacher of singing, Manuel Garcia. At Viardot-Garcia's soirées, Fauré met not only Gounod, whom he greatly admired, but the novelists Flaubert, Georges Sand, and Turgenev (Nectoux 1976).

A change in style is apparent in the *mélodies* written between 1872–1878. Somewhat against his natural inclinations, Fauré produced songs that would show the vocal abilities of Mme. Viardot and her daughters, Claudie and Marianne, to best advantage. "Barcarolle" of Marc Monnier was dedicated to Mme. Viardot; "Au bord de l'eau" of Sully Prudhomme, to Claudie. The two delightful duets "Tarentelle" of Monnier, and "Puisqu'ici-bas toute âme" of Hugo, were dedicated to both sisters.

Fauré's brief engagement to Marianne Viardot was broken in the fall of 1877 (Nectoux 1976). This episode, which hurt him deeply, is reflected in the miniature song cycle *Poéme d'un jour,* to texts of Charles Grandmougin: the anxious hope of "Rencontre," the angry disappointment of "Toujours," and the bittersweet resignation of "Adieu." "Après un rêve" of Romain Bussine dates from 1878, and is one of Fauré's most passionate outbursts. The song is atypical of Fauré, but probably his most frequently performed composition.

During the years 1878–1884, Fauré devoted a great part of his creative energies to song writing. The beautifully retrospective "Automne" of Armand Silvestre and the famous "Les berceaux" of Sully Prudhomme, with their long, arching melodic lines, are contemporary with, and

similar to, the "Élégie" for cello and piano. In a lighter vein we find "Nell," "Notre amour" and "Chanson d'amour." Still another aspect of Fauré's musical personality is revealed in the exotic "Les roses d'Ispahan" of Leconte de Lisle. These are among Fauré's most frequently performed *mélodies,* which became Volume Two in the collection published by Hamelle. "Le secret" of Armand Silvestre, with its simple but original modulations, "Aurore" and "Fleur jetée," by the same author, are equally popular, and also date from this period.

When Fauré married in 1883, he took a wife far different from the kind he would have found in the somewhat unconventional Viardot family. Marie Fremiet also came from an artistic background—she was the daughter of a prominent sculptor—but, according to contemporary accounts, was a model of domesticity (Suckling). In all probability, it was a far better match for the reserved, undemonstrative Fauré.

The years following his marriage were particularly difficult for Fauré. His wife's poor health made it impossible for him to be present at his dying father's bedside. Although he was beginning to receive recognition as a composer, his financial position was far from secure. His worries were manifested in frequent violent headaches and dizziness (Suckling).

Not a trace of this is apparent in the calm and serenity of Fauré's *Requiem Mass* of 1887. It was written as a memorial to his father. By the time the work was first performed at a service at the Church of the Madeleine, where Fauré served for many years, his mother had also died.

A certain turmoil, even violence, is contained in the two sea lyrics of Jean Richepin, "Larmes" and "Au Cimetière," written in 1889. Such dramatic songs, as we have noted, are not characteristic of Fauré, but these *mélodies* may have served as a catharsis for the anxieties of the previous years.

The year 1887 marks Fauré's first setting of the poetry of Paul Verlaine (1818–1894). "It is possible to say, perhaps, that the modern French *mélodie* was born at that very moment," Pennington has written. The elegance and subdued sensuality of Verlaine's *Fêtes galantes* evoked a sympathetic and immediate response in the composer. "Clair de lune" may be described as a piano piece with vocal accompaniment. Fauré captured perfectly both the irony and sadness of the lyric's atmosphere. Verlaine's "Spleen," which Fauré composed the following year, is perhaps best known in its version by Debussy.

A vacation in Italy during May and June of 1891 at the invitation of Princess Edmond de Polignac (an American from the Singer sewing machine family) afforded Fauré a rare opportunity to relax and meditate (Nectoux 1980). The *Cinq mélodies de Venise* to Verlaine was a result of this respite. Although the songs were sketched out in Italy during his trip, there is little that is Venetian about them. "Mandoline," like "Claire de lune," is conceivably related to the Italian masked comedy, and "A Clymène" is set to a barcarolle rhythm. The remaining songs are the melancholy "En Sourdine," the breathless "Green," and the exquisite "C'est l'extase."

The three songs of the earlier *Poème d'un jour* were linked by the continuity of their texts. Fauré formed a cycle in the *Cinq mélodies de Venise* through a thematic unity, accomplished with such subtlety

that it goes unnoticed by the listener. The final song, "C'est l'extase," recalls musical elements from the preceding four, effectively bring the cycle to a close.

The *Cinq mélodies de Venise* demonstrates Fauré's increasing preoccupation with the song cycle. Forty-three of his approximately one hundred songs are to be found in that form. As Pennington has noted: "Neither Schubert nor Schumann, song cycle composers 'par excellence,' set as great a proportion of their songs in cycles."

A work of even greater importance than the *Cinq mélodies de Venise* is the Verlaine cycle, *La bonne chanson* of 1892–94. Fauré chose nine of the twenty-one poems from the collection of the same name and dedicated it to its first interpreter, Emma Bardac, who was later to become Debussy's second wife. The cycle is unique for its time, in that it is devoted completely to the expression of joy—in contrast to the typical German cycle filled with *Angst* and *Weltschmerz*. Verlaine wrote the poems when he was about to marry, with high hopes of ending his dissolute way of existence and embarking on a normal life. It was not to be, but his faith in love and anticipation of happiness were preserved for all time in his poetry and Fauré's music, rich in variety and contrast, despite the limitation of one prevailing mood.

La bonne chanson was the only work by Fauré to provoke any sort of scandal. His publisher at first refused to accept it, and his friend and mentor Saint-Saëns declared, "Fauré has become completely mad" (Nectoux 1976). The composer's normally cónservative idiom yielded to the passion of Verlaine's lyrics, stretching the boundaries of tonality to their limits, although never exceeding them. Recognition of the cycle as a masterpiece, however, was not long in coming.

As in any integrated cycle, the individual songs of *La bonne chanson* lose much of their meaning when sung out of context. The concluding "L'hiver a cessé" is occasionally programmed separately. Bernac (1971) mentions a version of the cycle for string quartet and piano, but warns, "inspite of the fact that it was made by the composer, it is not successful at all, and cannot be recommended."

Fauré returned to Verlaine in 1894 for "Prison," an expression of the poet's despair over his lost youth. Leconte de Lisle's "Le parfum impérissable" drew from Fauré a *mélodie* unforgettable in its atmosphere of tenderness and mystery. Three beautiful songs to the lyrics of Albert Samain, "Arpège," "Soir," and "Accompagnement," are also first-rate Fauré. Mention should also be made of his only duet for male and female voices (mezzo-soprano and baritone), "Pleurs d'or," and Fauré's only song to an English text, "Mélisande's Song," written in 1898 for a London production of Maeterlinck's play *Pelléas et Mélisande*.

Wide recognition and financial security came relatively late in life to Fauré. For most of his career he had been an outsider—he had not attended the Paris Conservatory, he had won no Prix de Rome in composition, and he had written few large-scale works (Cooper). He succeeded Théodore Dubois as director of the conservatory in 1905, and other honors followed. Increasing deafness became a problem in his later years, until in 1920 he had to resign his directorship because of it. As with Beethoven, no doubt his loss of hearing accounts for the inward turn of Fauré's music toward the end of his life.

Cooper succinctly sums up Fauré's later style:

> The works from 1907 onwards virtually forego colour, and even the ornamental writing for the piano, so typical of the composer, is progressively modified. The intellectual content becomes correspondingly denser; harmonies are increasingly elliptical, lines are severer and notes fewer.

For these reasons, the songs that Fauré wrote in his sixties and seventies may seem at first hearing to lack the appeal of those of his early and middle periods, but careful study of them will reveal a beauty of a different kind. In Bernac's words, "Fauré has now stripped away all facile seduction in his music, he has attained total purity."

The ten songs of *La chanson d'Eve* were written during 1906–10, while Fauré was working on his opera *Pénélope*. The poetry of Charles van Lerberghe (1861–1907), taken from a collection by the same title, is replete with mystery and symbolism. Fauré constructed a cycle in which Eve discovers and interprets the newly created world. The first six songs, as well as the eighth, come from the initial part of the book, entitled "Premières paroles," the seventh from the section "Tentation." The composer then skipped to the concluding portion ("Crépuscule"), avoiding "La faute," to finish the cycle. The length of *La chanson d'Eve*, as well as Fauré's musical asceticism, doubtless discourages frequent performances. Bernac has sanctioned performing a shorter version of it, and also of Fauré's cycle *La jardin clos*.

Le jardin clos of 1914 received its title from one of the parts of van Lerberghe's *Entrevisions*. The lyrics of the cycle's eight songs, like those of its predecessor, are feminine with a sensuality that is never stated. Fauré's music is even more austere.

Mirages, Fauré's penultimate cycle of four songs, was written in 1919 for the singer Madeleine Grey, whose "voice of flesh and soul" had captivated the composer in his old age (Nectoux 1976). The poems by the Baroness Renée de Brimont are not on a level with those of van Lerberghe's, but follow in the same aesthetic direction. In *Mirages*, the voice, which never rises to a level above piano, often approaches speaking rather than singing; the music seems to come from the sound of the words. The monochromatic quality of the first three songs makes the last, in contrast, as Suckling has observed, "one of the most vertiginous things ever written—and that without the aid of dynamics or acrobatics."

The texts of Fauré's farewell to song, *L'horizon chimérique*, 1922, are both more virile and more lyric than those of the preceding three cycles. The author, Jean de la Ville de Mirmont, was killed in World War I.

The first of the four songs finds the poet standing on shore, placing his hopes and dreams on the infinite sea. In the second he is on board ship; his pain and suffering are left behind him on land. The third song, "Diane, Séléné," is an invocation to the moon, in which the poet aspires to her calm and limpidity. This lovely nocturne could very well be Fauré's greatest song; certainly it contains the very essenee of his art. Bernac called it "the French counterpart of Schubert's 'Nacht und Träume'."

The cycle ends with the poet's expression of conflicting emotions: "I belong to those whose desires are earth-bound . . . (but) I feel within me an unappeased long-

ing for great departures." Fauré's music reveals that death held no more terror for him at seventy-seven than it did thirty-five years earlier when he composed his *Requiem*. *L'horizon chimérique* is a magnificent conclusion to the composer's sixty-year career of song writing.

A review of Fauré's *mélodies* leaves the impression of both evolution and unity. Fauré began within the tradition of the *romance* inherited from his predecessors, Berlioz, Gounod, Saint-Saëns, and numerous others, and quickly surpassed them. Even in his earliest period, where their influence and his experience in the Viardot salon are evident, his originality is already apparent.

Fauré's maturity in the *mélodie* begins with his discovery of Verlaine. The excellence of the best songs of his middle years equals those of his friend Duparc and his younger colleagues Ravel and Debussy. Six of Verlaine's poems were set by both Fauré and Debussy: "Clair de lune," "Spleen," "Mandoline," "En sourdine," "Green," and "C'est l'extase." (We have noted previously Debussy's more successful version of "Spleen." There is no clear-cut consensus as to the "preferred" version of the remaining lyrics.)

The cycles from *La chanson d'Eve* onward are unique. Still, in their apparently different idiom one may sense more austere versions of earlier songs. Cooper has noted that Fauré was one of the first to lead the way in the stripping away of musical inessentials, a practice that became fashionable among composers in the years following World War I.

Although Fauré's art has at times been compared to that of Brahms, unlike the Germans, there is little of the folk song tradition in the French *mélodie*—particularly the *mélodies* of Fauré. But both Fauré and Brahms were willing to take liberties with a text for the sake of a beautiful musical prosody. Neither attempted to set each word of a poem (Debussy and Hugo Wolf were similar in this respect), but rather to evoke an atmosphere (Nectoux 1980; Sams 1972).

Fauré's approach to setting words to music did not stem from a lack of literary background. During his years at the École Niedermeyer he twice won the prize for literary studies, and later in life he was an avid reader and book collector (Nectoux).

The list of Fauré's poets is, in general, quite respectable: Hugo, Gautier, Verlaine, Leconte de Lisle, and van Lerberghe. Although he set more than a few second-rate authors, he was aware that a mediocre lyric might furnish the foundation for a fine song. He also realized that certain excellent poetry could overwhelm a composer's music. Fauré once expressed the opinion that he had not been completely successful with Hugo and Leconte de Lisle because their verse was too rich and complete. The role of music, he felt, was "to highlight the profound feeling that lives in the soul of the poet and that words are powerless to translate exactly" (Nectoux 1976).

We have noted the refined and subtle qualities in Fauré's *mélodies*. These traits, which become more pronounced in the later works, are doubtless the very reason they are not performed more frequently, despite Fauré's abundant gifts of harmonic and melodic originality. The purely physical demands made on both singer and accompanist, never overwhelming in his earliest songs, decrease over the years. The vocal compass in the *mélodies* of the final period is seldom more than an octave.

"His vocal lines are deceivingly simple, often inviting over-confidence on the part of both singer and accompanist, only to find out later that they went the wrong path," warns Espina (1977). "Sincerity, no matter how achieved, is the antidote."

Fauré's music, and his songs in particular, are elegant in their refinement and grace. "He was the last great traditionalist in French music, more human and fruitful than Ravel, more sane though less original than Debussy and more wholly, unequivocally French than either." (Cooper.) His work reflects not only the French spirit in its finest manifestation, but that of civilized humanity.

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Arpège
Prison
Soir
Le plus doux chemin
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Seth Daniels Bingham: 100th Anniversary, an Appreciation

by M. Searle Wright
The American Organist
June 1982

This year marks the one-hundredth anniversary of the birth of Seth Daniels Bingham, one of America's most distinguished figures in organ and church music. In recognition of this milestone, his organ piece, *Ut Queant Laxis: Hymn to St. John the Baptist*, will be played by Frederick Swann at the Washington Cathedral to prelude the Opening Festival Service of the AGO National Convention on June 28.

Seth Bingham's activities were many and varied; and his contributions as composer, organist, church musician, teacher, conductor, administrator, author, critic, and goodwill ambassador for the American organ world are of incalculable value. A chronological, factual outline may provide the best approach to a clear picture of this remarkable man and the development of his long and illustrious career as a devoted servant of his art.

Bingham was born in Bloomfield, New Jersey, on April 16, 1882. Although neither parent was a professional musician, his mother was an amateur pianist and poet. He was given his first piano lessons by a musically inclined aunt, and his schooling was begun in a public school in Bloomfield.

From his early years Seth possessed a very good singing voice, and he became a member of a boys' choir in Naugatuck whence the family had moved from Bloomfield. The lads in this Connecticut factory town were a tough lot who were often given to settling matters with their fists. Bingham, who was of rugged build and high spirits, soon established himself as the "head boy" of the choir, and at sixteen he was put in charge of the group.

Later in his career, Seth studied voice with John Finley Williamson (founder of the Westminster Choir School) and subsequently gave his own choristers at the Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church private voice instruction. Each spring, the choir would present one of the Gilbert and Sullivan operettas with its director, Seth Bingham, "starred" in a leading role. He might well have pursued a professional singing career had he been so inclined.

The year 1900 found Seth enrolled at Yale University from which he was graduated with a B.A. degree in 1904; further

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study earned him a Bachelor of Music degree in 1908. During this period he studied theory and composition with Horatio Parker and organ with Harry B. Jepson, distinguishing himself by winning the prize for organ playing as well as the Heald and Stewart prizes for composition, and he passed the Fellowship examination of the American Guild of Organists.

In 1906, following his undergraduate days at Yale, Seth went to France at the instigation of Jepson for a year to study organ with Guilmant and Widor and composition with Vincent d'Indy. While a student in Paris, Seth married Mlle. Blanche Guy, a singer whose mother had been a pupil of César Franck. Blanche had been trained for opera but had to be content with concert performances since her family frowned upon a stage career for a wellborn young lady!

Now that he had acquired a wife, Bingham gave serious thought to the possible course of his musical future. He once told me that, although he had developed a great interest in the wide field of secular composition (and had already a number of orchestral and chamber works to his credit), he felt he must look to a more dependable means of providing an income than he could expect to realize from writing big orchestral pieces. This decision on Bingham's part proved to be a most happy one for American organists! Now that he was armed with professional composition equipment and a knowledge and feeling for traditional organ technique as exemplified by the French school of playing, he was prepared to bring to American organ music an idiomatic style and clarity which it had heretofore only occasionally attained.

One of Bingham's more impressive early organ works is the sturdy *Prelude and Fugue in C minor*. This piece he dedicated to his teacher Charles M. Widor who, having read through the composition, embraced Seth in the affectionate French manner, planted a kiss on each cheek and assured him he had written a truly fine work. Many years later this piece was played at Blanche Bingham's memorial service in accordance with her request made a year or so before her death.

As a result of his associations in France, several celebrated organists of that country, including Vierne and Langlais, dedicated works to Bingham testifying eloquently to the high esteem they held for the man and his music.

Bingham's daughter, Mrs. Frances Dale, reminds us: "At a time when American composers and performers were not recognized in Europe, he established close musical and personal contacts with French musicians who learned to take seriously not only Bingham's works but those of other Americans." On Palm Sunday 1971, Bingham's "Primavera" and "Bells of Riverside" were performed as a part of the festival celebration at Notre-Dame Cathedral in Paris.

As organist and choirmaster, Bingham's most important posts were the Rye Presbyterian Church, Rye, New York (1908--13), and the Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church in New York City. This latter position he held from 1913 until his retirement in 1953.

As a teacher, Bingham was instructor in organ and theory at Yale University from 1908 to 1919. From 1920 until 1954 he was an associate professor at Columbia University where he taught organ, theory and composition. He was a lecturer at the Union Theological Seminary School of Sacred Music from 1953 to 1965, con-

ducting classes in advanced composition for the doctoral candidates.

During these years of service to academe, many well-known names in American music of our own day came under his influence: Elie Siegmeister, Bruce Simonds, Howard Shanet, William J. Mitchell, Robert Elmore, to mention but a few.

I was one of Bingham's younger colleagues at both Columbia and Union Seminary, and I cannot recall a single instance of unpleasantness or friction between him and his fellow teachers or the students. Bingham's enthusiasm and ability to encourage talent and industry in his students and fellow musicians was enormous. His generosity toward others and his humility about himself and his work had to be experienced to be believed. His manner was invariably comfortable and friendly and to all of us younger colleagues he was always "Seth." Never did we entertain the feeling that here was an "old-timer" who must be handled with "kid gloves." We always felt privileged to be with him—and indeed, in spirit he was usually the youngest of us all.

In addition to his teaching at the above-mentioned institutions, Bingham "served his country" as a staff member of the U.S. Army's American University at Biarritz during 1945 and 1946 where he taught theory and composition. In 1952 an honorary doctoral degree was conferred upon him by Ohio Wesleyan University for his many and superior contributions in the field of church music.

In spite of his easy manner, Seth was tremendously demanding in matters that concerned music—church music in particular. Only the best possible solutions would do! For him, a sacred text did not ensure a piece of church music unless it was given a truly worthy musical setting.

I have always found Bingham's choral and vocal music comfortable and idiomatic—great attention having been paid to making sure the music sings well and naturally. The composer's versification seems always "right" and sensitive, preserving a natural flow and accentuation. Nonetheless, Bingham's melodic and harmonic style shows the influence of his instrumental thinking and feeling which tends toward a certain angularity of line. This quality has at times "put off" the less-experienced choir. The fact of the matter is that Bingham does not rely upon "cut and dried" musical solutions or familiar platitudes to project his message; as a result his works invariably have some surprises in store for the performer. This element of unexpectedness is indeed one of the hallmarks of his personal style which contributes so much to its perennial freshness.

Bingham's music is indeed the embodiment of the man's personality. The Yankee wit, the often rawboned toughness, the suave urbanity, the warmth and humanity are all to be found in just about everything he wrote. He hated the nonessential, the padding, and sentimentality, and he frequently made ruthless cuts in revising some of his very early pieces. He was as critical of his own work as he was of the music of others. I have in my possession several volumes of Bingham's earlier organ works in which he has blue-penciled many bars and written in "better" joins, etc. One rather lovely impressionistic, quasi-Franckian piece has written in the composer's hand, just under the title, "No good—should never have been published," followed by an exclamation point.

Bingham's musical inclinations tended

toward neoclassicism with an emphasis on a linear, contrapuntal style of writing, and he was given to weeding out any unnecessary elements in his textures. As time went on, his works became less chromatic and more strongly modal in flavor. His avoidance of lush harmony for its own sake suggested a sort of puritanical streak which seemed to belie his truly warm nature; however, this eschewal of "overripeness" was undoubtedly a reaction to the banal harmonic clichés so prevalent in church and organ music during the preceding fifty years or so.

I recall discussing settings of the Franciscan *Canticle of the Sun* with him when I was planning to give a performance at Columbia University of Bingham's own setting of this evocative text. He felt that Mrs. H.H.A. Beach's *Canticle,* while very well made, was a bit too "juicy" for his taste. The enormous and gorgeous setting by Sowerby he felt to be a strong and quite stunning work but thought its very grandeur did not serve well the spirit of the words of the humane and humble little Francis.

Upon another occasion, following a recital in which I had played the "Legend" from Karg-Elert's late work *Triptych,* Bingham with his customary thoughtfulness came back to greet me. He expressed generous appreciation for the program but then "pulled a face," as the British say, recoiled and with a malicious twinkle in his eye said, "But, oh, the Karg'Elert—awful stuff—but I thought you played it beautifully!"

Bingham's personal style with its quasi-modal melodic line, sparing textures and rhythmic vitality reflects a fertile imagination and strong sense of invention. His musical drive would never allow him to settle down into comfortable routines or familiar "ruts," and he continued to the end of his days searching for fresh ways of utilizing traditional materials to express his ideas.

I think it is safe to say that, with the possible exception of his *Night Sorrow* (a transcription by the composer of an earlier piece for strings), Bingham has published nothing for organ which is not thoroughly suited to the medium, which is not truly idiomatic—truly organistic.

There are few living persons (if any) who were privileged to hear Bingham play during the 1920s when he was at the height of his powers as a recitalist. In later years the many demands made upon him by his church duties, teaching, and administrative work for the AGO and other organizations made continuous inroads upon his time and energy, leaving little of either for regular practice. Consequently, the appearances as soloist became infrequent. I can remember, however, with much pleasure having, by chance, "caught" a late afternoon recital which he played at Columbia University Chapel sometime in the early 1950s shortly after I had assumed my post as director of chapel music at the university. The weather was stormy and there were but a few in the audience. Arriving late, I crept into a seat at the west end of the chapel to see how things were going. Realizing how little time Bingham had had for preparation of this recital I was astonished at the clarity, style and downright brilliance of his playing—all of this in addition to scrupulous accuracy! As I recall, the program included a large prelude and fugue of Bach, some early and contemporary French music and ended with Bingham's own *Toccata on "Leoni."* Here was organ playing in the grand manner and a completely moving

musical experience. Yet when I went to greet him, following the recital, he seemed terribly surprised that I should have "sat all through the program." His comment was, "I had no idea that a *real* organist such as you would be out front—my playing just isn't up to recital work any more." Despite my insistence that it was truly a superb job, I am sure he felt I was just trying to be kind! Such was Bingham's perfectionist objectivity and his great humility.

His sense of organ registration (both in writing and playing) was clear and precise—colorful without being "fussy," and always exactly suited to the musical textures and shapes.

Owing to my own duties as a church musician in my New York days, I was never able to hear much of Bingham's service playing and his choral work. What I *did* hear impressed me by its strong sense of purpose and the reverent spirit of performance. His choice of choral repertoire included the best of all periods with considerable emphasis upon new works which were both fresh and practical. Bingham's sensitivity to the liturgical and devotional needs of the occasion was strongly apparent in his church music program. One felt a genuine spirit of devotion, with never a hint of piousness or smugness. There was never any sensationalism or theatricality about his work.

When it came to secular music, Bingham could and did have his other side. His songs, such as the poignant "New England Woman" and the wickedly amusing "Felicity of Animal Kingdom," show a delightful poetic sense and subtle ironic wit that were a very real part of the composer's personality.

The man's personality showed through in everything he chose to express. His music is always meaningful, clear and to the point. Bingham's works are never pretentious, never dull, sometimes stark and sober, often witty, and frequently grand in a rugged sort of way. While his music is easily recognizable by its individuality of style, Bingham is not given to repeating himself. He had a particularly felicitous way with the scherzando type of piece and there are numerous examples such as "Roulade," "Primavera," "The Rhythmic Trumpet," "Black Cherries," "The Rhythm of Easter" and some of the *Variation Studies*. Yet one is never in danger of confusing one of these compositions with another of the same genre. Now, ten years after his death, Bingham's music seems not to have become "dated" as have so many works of others that were written during the same period.

Despite his technical assurance and his strong musical convictions, Bingham tended to adopt a somewhat humorous and self-deprecatory attitude about his work both as a performer and a composer. This great modesty about himself became apparent when he was expressing appreciation for the works of others. I can recall upon many occasions Bingham's praising to the skies the work of his younger colleague, Leo Sowerby. He recounted for me how the young Sowerby, on his way to take up residence at the American Academy in Rome (as the first recipient of the celebrated *Prix*), had stopped off in New York and brought a sheaf of new works to show him. Bingham's admiration for the younger man's talent and gifts was boundless.

Both Bingham and Sowerby have produced some of the most important contributions in the field of American organ and church music repertoire. Although

Sowerby was the more prolific of the two, it was Bingham whose works for organ generally surpassed those of his fellow composer in their completely *idiomatic* qualities and conception.

During his later years, Seth was asked to write a series of brief sketches of a number of his well-known colleagues for publication in the old TAO Magazine. This he did with a great insight and keen sense of humor. As usual, his typical warmth and good nature were reflected in these vignettes.

Bingham's sense of humor and his personal charm always made a meeting with him, either by chance or for professional reasons, a happy occasion. He was a tall man, handsome in a rather rugged way, and possessed of a dignified bearing which, upon first encounter, might have led one to suspect that he was austere and formidable. It usually took no more than one meeting with this lovable man to dispel any such misapprehension.

The warmth so characteristic of Bingham pervaded the entire family life of Seth, Blanche and their children. It was always a privilege to pay a visit to their large, rambling apartment high above Claremont Avenue near 116th Street.

French was generally spoken *en famille* but, when guests arrived, this gave way to English for the benefit of those who were not comfortably bilingual. Seth used to boast that he was probably the only French-speaking true Yankee in New York City. His lovely wife, Blanche, retained a delightful French accent in her English speaking to the end of her days. Both of the Binghams were wonderfully companionable, unusually intelligent and highly articulate. One sensed a spirit of warm camaraderie at their home, and an atmosphere of cheerful yet dignified informality seemed to prevail. Blanche and Seth always showed a deep affection for one another. She called him "Jinky" and he referred to her as "Chouquette."

A delightful and vivid account of the Bingham family's last trip to France was written by Seth for the old TAO Magazine. This article was documented with photographs taken by the family, and he indulged in many happy recollections of French cuisine and wine and sea bathing.

In 1957, for the first International Congress of Organists, which was held in London, our American-wing planning committee chose Bingham's *Connecticut Suite* (a concerto for organ and orchestra) to be played in a program at Westminster Abbey. A stunning performance of this demanding score was given by that tireless champion of contemporary organ music, Dr. Marilyn Mason. The program included the Sowerby *Classic Concerto*, a Handel concerto, and the Schoenberg *Variations*. Dr. Sowerby conducted his own work as well as the Handel, which he was especially happy to direct since the composer is buried in the Abbey. Bingham was asked to direct his *Connecticut Suite* but modestly declined saying he was sure "Searle would make a better job of it." I have always felt grateful to him for that decision as it gave me the opportunity to conduct this work of which I am so fond—and at Westminster Abbey! I am certain that he knew how much I was longing to do this. Yet another example of his thoughtfulness.

Finally, one cannot think of Bingham without remembering the many services rendered the American Guild of Organists for over sixty years! Surely, few, if any, living members of the Guild can match his long record of activities on its behalf.

Bingham held the office of National Vice President and at another time that of Auditor for the Guild. He was elected many times to the National Council which he served with great distinction, and his outstanding work as chairman of the National Expansion and Convention Committee will be long remembered. His contributions as a member of the National Examination Committee were also innumerable.

Throughout his long and distinguished career, Bingham retained his interest in and enthusiasm for all that was lively, fresh and stimulating in music. Even in his late years, he could be seen hurrying up or down subway steps on his way to recitals, services or concerts which he hoped might prove rewarding—often to review the program for an organ journal, perchance to support and encourage some gifted young musician, or possibly just to enjoy what was being offered. We younger musicians always felt highly honored and gratified by the presence of Bingham at one of our presentations.

Whatever he found to do throughout his busy career was done carefully, thoughtfully and with an amazing vitality. Everything he attempted was given the best that was within him. His list of achievements is indeed impressive and, when one considers the many and varied areas of his undertakings, the record becomes staggering.

Reflecting upon Seth Bingham's unflagging efforts to bring his best to all he attempted, one can only repeat with heartfelt gratitude the scriptural pronouncement, "Well done, good and faithful servant." What a musician! What a gentleman! What a man! Bless him.

Organ Works

Six Pieces op. 9 (1920-23)
Prelude and Fugue in C, Adoration, Roulade, Chorale Prelude on "St. Flavian," Aria, Counter Theme—Boston Music Co., H.W. Gray.

First Suite op. 25 (1926)
Cathedral Strains, Intercession, Rhythm of Easter, Toccata—G. Schirmer.

Pioneer America op. 26 (1928)
Redskin Rhapsody, Along the Frontier, Sailing over Jordan, Puritan Procession (published separately)—H.W. Gray.

Harmonies of Florence op. 27 (1929)
Florentine Chimes, Primavera, Savonarola, Twilight at Fiesole, March of the Medici—H.W. Gray.

Carillon de Chateau-Thierry (1936), from Memories of France—H.W. Gray,

Pastoral Psalms op. 30 (1938)
Unto the Hills, Forgotten Graves, Black Cherries, Voice of the Tempest, Beside Still Waters—Carl Fischer.

Five Pieces op. 36 (1939)
Prelude and Fughetta in F, Agnus Dei, Toccata on "Leoni" (to H.W. Gray), Night Sorrow, Bells of Riverside—J. Fischer & Bro.

Passacaglia op. 40 (1939)—J. Fischer & Bro.

Nativity Song (1941)—H.W. Gray.

Twelve Hymn-Preludes op. 38 (1942)
Set I: Ajalon (Gracious Spirit, dwell with me), Festal Song (Rise up, O men of God), Morwellham (O Holy City seen of God), Martyn (Jesus, Lover of my soul), Toplady (Rock of Ages), Truro (Lift up your heads).
Set II: Bethany (Nearer, my God, to Thee), Bread of Life (Break Thou the Bread of Life), Langran (Lead us, O Father), Rathbun (in the Cross of Christ), Need (I need Thee every hour), Olivet (My faith

looks up to Thee)—H.W. Gray.
At the Cradle of Jesus (1943)—J. Fischer & Bro.
Pastorale op. 16 (1943), from Memories of France—H.W. Gray.
Baroques op. 41 (1944)
Overture, Rondo Cainato, Sarabande, Rhythmic Trumpet, Voluntary—Galaxy, also Elkin & Co. Ltd. (London).
Seven Lowell Mason Preludes or Postludes op. 42 (1945)
Wesley (Hail to the brightness), Boylston (Blest be the tie that binds), Missionary Hymn (From Greenland's icy mountains), Watchman (Watchman, tell us of the night), Laban (My soul, be on thy guard), Henley (We would see Jesus), Work Song (Work, for the night is coming)—H.W. Gray.
Fantasia in C op. 50 (1949) (Modern Anthology, Vol. I)—H.W. Gray.
Variation Studies op. 54 (1950)
Choral, Canon, Pizzicato, Duo Staccato, Trio, Organum Plenum, Embellishment, Dialogue, Dissonance, Arpeggio—Witmark.
Thirty-Six Hymn and Carol Canons op. 55 (1952)—H.W. Gray.
Sixteen Carol Canons (from op. 55) (1952)—H.W. Gray.
Hymn-Fantasy on "Riverton" (1957)—Summy-Birchard.
Sonata of Prayer and Praise op. 60 (1960)—H.W. Gray.
Ut Queant Laxis op. 61 (1962), Hymn to St. John Baptist—C.F. Peters.
Introit on "Elton" (1962)—WLSM (Cincinnati).
He Is Risen op. 62 (1962)
Fantasy-Toccata on Easter Themes—H.W. Gray.
Prelude and Fughetta on "St. Kevin" (1962)—H.W. Gray.
Offertory on a Spanish Folk-song—WLSM.
Annunciation (Modern Anthology Vol. II)—H.W. Gray (in preparation).

Choral Works
Secular
Yale Song: Mother of Men (1908)—G. Schirmer.
English Love Lyrics (1921), SSA and SSAA, a cappella—H.W. Gray.
Gently Johnny (1924), TTBB—H.W. Gray.
Cowboy Songs (1930), TTBB and SATB—H.W. Gray.
Wilderness Stone (1937), American Folk Cantata for soli, chorus and orchestra—H.W. Gray.
Witch-teasing (1944), SSA—Galaxy.
Come All You Fair (1945), SSAA, a cappella—G. Schirmer.
I Must and Will Get Married (1946), SA—J. Fischer & Bro.
New England Woman (1949), SA—J. Fischer & Bro.
Felicity of Animal World (1949)—H.W. Gray.
Sacred
Let God Arise (1916), SATB and TTBB—Schmidt.
The Strife is O'er (1932), a cappella—J. Fischer & Bro.
Come Thou Almighty King (1933), a cappella—Carl Fischer.
O Love That Wilt Not Let Me Go (1936), a cappella—H.W. Gray.
Benedictus Es (1938)—H.W. Gray.
Te Deum (1940)—H.W. Gray.
The Lord's Prayer (1941)—Carl Fischer.
Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis (1943)—H.W. Gray.
Immortal Love (1943), a cappella—J. Fischer & Bro.

Reprints Bingham

Personent Hodie (1943)—H.W. Gray.
Puer Natus (1944), a cappella—Schmitt-Hall & McCreary.
A Come and Mourn (1945)—Galaxy.
Gabriel from the Heaven (1945), SATB and SSA—Schmitt, Hall & McCreary.
The Christmas Child (1945) SATB and SSA—Galaxy.
Jubilate Deo (1946)—Boston Music Co.
Luer Nobis Nascitur (1946)—G. Schirmer.
O Man Rejoice (1948), a cappella—Edwin H. Morris.
Away in a Manger (1948), SATB, Youth Choir ad lib—J. Fischer & Bro.
The Christmas Man (1949), soprano solo and SATB, a cappella—J. Fischer & Bro.
Canticle of the Sun op. 52 (1949), a cappella—H.W. Gray.
Christ of the Upward Way (1950), SAB —West.
Twelve Choral Prayers (1951), only two published, a cappella—H.W. Gray.
Four Marian Litanies op. 58 (1955), a cappella—St. Mary's Press.
Missa Salvatoris (1955)—Gregorian Institute.
Missa St. Michaelis (1956), a cappella—J. Fischer & Bro.
Missa St. Michaelis (1956), Credo only, chorus, organ and optional brass—H.W. Gray.
Communion Service (1958)—Novello.
Sing to the Lord op. 59 no. 1 (1959), chorus, baritone solo and organ, brass and timpani optional—Union Theological Seminary Commission.
Love Came Down at Christmas (1960), SATB—H.W. Gray.
Worship the Lord op. 59 no. 2 (1960), chorus, three brass, strings, organ—Commissioned by Moravian Church, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania.
As Men of Old (1962)—H.W. Gray.
The Presentation (1963)—WLSM.
Perfect Through Suffering (1971), text by his mother—C.F. Peters.

Orchestral and Chamber Music
Piece Gothique for Organ and Orchestra (1909), Steinert prize, manuscript only.
Wall Street Fantasy
String Quartet
Passacaglia
Suite for Wind
Memories of France
Tame Animal Tunes for Chamber Orchestra
Pioneer America
The Breton Cadence
Wilderness Stone, chorus and orchestra, rental only—H.W. Gray.
Concerto for Organ and Orchestra op. 46 (1946), rental only—H.W. Gray.
Connecticut Suite op. 56 (1953) Town Meeting, Autumn Haze, Old Yale—organ, strings, trumpet, trombone, percussion—H.W. Gray, rental only.
Concerto for Brass, Snare Drum and Organ op. 57 (1954)—H.W. Gray.

Published Songs
An Old Song (H.W. Gray)
Brahma, The Four-Way Lodge—Two Japanese Songs (G. Schirmer).

Bingham Organ Music Available from NLS in Braille

Pastoral psalms, op. 30 BRM 19662, 19663
Carl Fischer. APH

Pastoral psalms, op. 30
Carl Fischer. APH
Unto the hills BRM 8542

Forgotten graves BRM 8543
Black cherries BRM 8544
Voice of the tempest BRM 8545
Beside still waters BRM 8546

Frank's Fiddle Shop

by Pat Watson
Frets Magazine
August 1982

Fifteen years ago, Frank Penwell needed fast, reliable repair work for his students' instruments. Frank, then the orchestra leader and string-instrument teacher at Washington Township Schools, in Indianapolis, Indiana, decided that the best way to get it was to learn how to do it himself. Today he is enjoying an additional career as the owner of Frank's Fiddle Shop (6426 N. College Ave., Indianapolis, IN 46220). During the summers, when he's not teaching music and conducting orchestras in the school system, he works at his shop full time.

Penwell more or less backed into his second career. To learn about instrument repair he studied with violin repairman Kenneth Glass, who was also a violinist with the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra. Penwell diligently studied the rudiments of the craft and devoted his evenings to mending school instruments. "Word got around that I was doing good work," Penwell says, "and I found myself in business."

Four years ago he opened his first repair center, working there part-time. Soon, however, he was up to his neck in broken violins and realized he needed both more help and more room. Joined by his twenty-eight-year-old son, Bill, Frank moved his shop to its larger, present location at the rear of a comfortable old house in the small Indianapolis suburb of Broad Ripple. Bill, a violist as well as a repairman, divides his time between work at the shop and performing with the White Water Opera Company, the Kokomo Symphony, and the Butler University Symphony. The staff grew to three when Frank hired repairman Jeff Prather, a bassist who spends his evenings playing with local jazz groups.

Given Penwell's love for instruments, it was a logical step for him to expand his business from instrument repair into instrument building. "I'm fascinated by making sick violins healthy," he says. "Any technician can learn to build an instrument, but it takes an artist to create a beautiful-sounding instrument. We have a young man with us who is on the verge of becoming such an artist—Bill Lakeberg."

Lakeberg, who has been with Frank for nearly two years, is a graduate of the Kenneth Warren School of Violin Making (28 East Jackson Blvd., Chicago, IL 60604), where students learn the art of building and repairing all kinds of string instruments. Lakeberg says it now takes him about six weeks to build a violin, but he has expectations of cutting that working time in half.

Like Penwell, Lakeberg had no professional ambitions when he first got into working with instruments. "A friend and I were looking around his attic when I found a violin that had belonged to his grandmother," he says. "I thought if I could fix it up, I could play it, so they let me have it and I tried to fix it. I went around to different people and asked if I could be their apprentice, but they all said, 'No; it would cost too much to train you.' Finally one person told me about the Kenneth Warren School, so I thought I'd try it for a month, and if it didn't work out, I'd quit. I ended

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up staying for three and a half years to complete the course."

To build a violin or a viola, Lakeberg starts out with the belly. He slices a wedge of rough-sawn spruce, and with an aliphatic glue—usually Titebond or Weldwood—he bookmatches the two halves to form the soundboard. "I like Sitka spruce and European spruce," he says. "I evaluate each piece individually." For the instrument's back, he usually uses medium-hard maple—either American or European—with a nice, curly figure. "It's a pretty wood with good density for good tone," he explains.

Using a wooden template, Lakeberg fits hand-carved basswood or spruce blocks to brace the corners. To shape the ribs, he briefly dips maple strips in water, being careful not to soak them. Then he uses a brass strap to pull the wet wood against a hot bending iron to get the curve he wants. Next, he clamps the damp wood to the mold so that it will dry in the desired shape.

Lakeberg then lays the roughed-out top and bottom of the instrument on the glued ribs and traces the ribs' outline on them, leaving a margin of about 6mm to be hand-shaped to a finished edge of 2.5mm.

Next, he shapes the back, using an assortment of his handmade finger planes to achieve the desired curve, within a variance of 3mm-5mm. The small planes are brass or bronze ovals that are fitted with tiny hardened-steel cutting blades. Lakeberg made them while he was a student. "You can buy them from woodworking catalogs," he says. "I didn't want to spend the money—but it ended up costing me more than the importer's prices to make them myself." The largest of Lakeberg's planes is about 38mm long and 19mm wide with a 12.7mm cutting blade; the smallest has a 6.35mm cutting blade.

After shaping the top and back of the instrument, Lakeberg fits thin strips of lining, which provide a wider surface for gluing, to the inside top and bottom edges of the ribs. Lakeberg prefers Alaskan cedar for the lining because it doesn't split easily; but he says that any spruce, willow, or basswood will do.

Because each piece of wood is different, Lakeberg explains, the arch for the belly of each violin is different. To get a proper arch, Lakeberg painstakingly scrapes the spruce tops with finger planes to achieve what he considers to be the right curve. He relies on both art and science, using his trained eyes as well as a micrometer.

When the top and back are almost finished, Lakeberg glues them to the ribs temporarily, using weak, diluted hide glue and leaving 2.5mm of overhang. Then he traces a channel for the purfling, which is made from ebony and white maple, and which is strictly utilitarian. "I want to keep the price down as much as possible," he says, "so I spend my time producing an unadorned instrument with the best possible sound."

Lakeberg finishes the wood by gently scraping it with a variety of handshaped spring-steel scrapers. He does this both inside and outside the body. "It should look as nice on the inside as it does on the outside," he explains.

After using a fine coping saw and a knife to carve the f-holes in the top, Bill fits and trims the bass bar to the inside of the belly. He then glues the back to the ribs with regular-strength hide glue, removes the wooden template, and—with weak hide glue—attaches the top to the ribs. "For most things, I use the old-

fashioned hide glue, even in new instruments," he says. "I use modern Titebond or Weldwood glue on the book-joints down the middle of the top and back because I want those to stay together. But every other place, I prefer using the hide glue because that makes it easier to take the instrument apart if it ever needs repair. With modern glue, if it isn't right the first time, you're in big trouble."

Lakeberg does not like pearl inlays or any other superfluous ornamentation, but "if someone wanted me to make a particular design, such as a different kind of scroll, I'd do that," he says. He completes his instruments with fingerboards, pegs, tailpieces, and chin-rests that he gets from violin supply houses. "I don't have time to make everything," he says.

One area that Lakeberg does spend a lot of time on is the finish. "Varnish is a controversial issue in violin making," he notes. "I'm still experimenting. Right now I prefer to use a linseed oil varnish that I make myself. I try to incorporate into that some softer gum, such as propolis or frankincense; it just softens the varnish a little and gives it a pleasing consistency. The soft gum also adds softness and flexibility to the finish."

After Lakeberg evens off any rough spots, he uses a French-polishing technique to bring the varnish to its full luster. First he polishes it with repeated hand rubbings, using a rag with a spot of oil and a spray of alcohol. For the final polish he uses gum benzoin, a resin that imparts a high gloss to the finish.

"The most important thing about building any wooden instrument," he maintains, "is to go every step of the way as neatly and precisely as possible. You must have all the joints fitted perfectly. To be a luthier, you must love what you're doing and love doing it well. The Kenneth Warren School taught me good basic workmanship. Since being out of school, the most important thing I've learned is that no matter how big or small the job is, do it the right way—completely—or you'll just have more headaches doing it over again to get it right."

Lakeberg gets several kinds of satisfaction from a job well done. "I like to hear other people play my instruments and enjoy them," he says. "I get a good feeling from making something someone else would enjoy playing."

Frank Penwell shares Bill's feelings, and as a teacher he attaches considerable importance to that element of enjoyment—particularly for children who are just beginning to play. "The child who is saddled with an inadequate clunker of an instrument will make very little progress if any at all," he says. "A professional can make almost any instrument sound good but a beginner with an inadequate instrument has very little chance of success."

With Penwell's two careers—teaching musical instruments and repairing them—he thrives on helping musicians achieve that kind of success. His dual professions, as a teacher and as the proprietor and chief craftsman of Frank's Fiddle Shop, have made him a very busy man, but he has no thought of simplifying his life.

"Giving up one for the exclusivity of the other would be very difficult," he says. "I love the kids, I love teaching, yet I find great satisfaction in repairing and restoring instruments as well. How could I cut off my right arm so my left could get stronger?"

Features

Braille Music Forum: Reading Foreign Braille Music—An Introduction

by Bettye Krolick

Are you making full use of the braille music in the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS) music collection? Do you look through the "New Music Materials" section of this magazine and select only those publications with the familiar APH, HP, and HC source designations? Some readers pay little attention to the source, some especially want to try music from other countries, and others are interested only in the familiar. It is to the latter group, the readers who use only a small portion of the NLS braille music resources, that I am addressing this article.

Understanding the Music

Some readers are immediately discouraged by signs they do not recognize instantly, unfamiliar formats, and foreign language text. None of these common deterents necessarily needs to keep anyone from using foreign braille music publications.

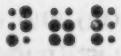
Most braille music readers can recognize easily 95 percent of the individual braille signs found in music produced in any country. The other five percent of the signs usually can be identified readily by looking them up in the *Dictionary of Braille Music Signs* (Bettye Krolick, Library of Congress, 1979). So an understanding of the signs themselves should not prevent most readers from using foreign braille music.

The *Dictionary* will also answer most questions about braille music formats. This reference tool explains the three general classifications of braille music formats (page 153, braille edition) and contains a format identification chart (page 156, braille edition). Following this chart, readers first identify the type of music: keyboard, instrumental (one or more parts), vocal (one or more parts), or theory or harmony. Next, they work from the characteristics or the arrangement of the braille on the page through page references leading to more detailed explanations of particular formats.

Generally, the best approach to reading unfamiliar foreign braille music is first to locate the beginning of the music. Most of the individual signs at this point will be recognizable. Those that are not could be clef signs, which refer to print clefs, information sometimes needed in teaching sighted students.

The following example shows two sets of treble and bass clef signs. All four are three-cell signs, and all begin and end with the same character; the difference is in the middle cells. The middle cell of the first set, encountered in U.S. transcriptions, contains a lower-cell G for the treble or G clef and a lower-cell F for the bass or F clef. The middle character of the second set, used in many other countries, indicates the treble clef by an interval of a second and the bass clef with the interval of a fourth. (In print, a portion of the treble clef symbol circles around the second line of the staff, and the bass clef has two dots—one above and one below the fourth line of the staff.) These are the most common clef signs; others can be identified by consulting the *Dictionary*.

Example

treble clef 

bass clef

treble clef

bass clef

Read on from the beginning of the piece. When you reach a new section, begin to decipher the meaning of numbers. They could be inclusive measures for the section, print page numbers, print staff numbers, section numbers, rehearsal numbers, or some of all of these. If both page and stave numbers are given, one or the other is usually in lower cell position. The types of numbers mentioned above are found in braille music divided into sections and written one hand at a time rather than in bar-over-bar format. The following clues will help you decipher their meaning. Hyphenated numbers are inclusive measure numbers, and if either the beginning or the ending number is followed by dot three, that measure is incomplete. Consecutive numbers scattered throughout a piece are section or rehearsal numbers. Page numbers are usually repeated at the beginning of more than one section of the music, and staff numbers never go higher than four or five before starting over with one.

Foreign Language Text

Foreign language text material can pose problems. If you need only the music, i.e., piano, clarinet, violin, etc., you can easily circumvent the difficulty by looking for the beginning of the music notation, as suggested earlier. Singers have a different problem, however, because they must read literary text, which sometimes contains foreign-language braille contractions. Notable exceptions to the use of contractions are Italian, where they are not used, and some Spanish braille. Questions about foreign braille contractions can be sent to the NLS Music Section or to the author.

Braille Music Sources

The NLS Music Section actively collects braille music from all over the world. Each braille music listing found under "New Music Materials" in this publication and all titles in future revisions of braille catalogs in the Music and Musician series will contain acquisition source designations such as NBT, SNB, STTB, VFB, HC, APH, and HP. These and other sources—international and domestic—from which NLS has acquired a significant amount of braille music in the recent past are listed below with addresses.

APH. American Printing House for the Blind, 1839 Frankfort Ave., Louisville, KY 40206

AVH. Association Valentin Haüy, 5–7 rue Duroc, 75007 Paris, France

HC. Handcopied braille; generally available only on loan from the Library of Congress

HP. Howe Press, Perkins School for the Blind, Watertown, MA 02172; materials now available from National Braille Press, 88 Saint Stephen St., Boston, MA 02115

NBT. Norges Blindeforbunds Trykkeri, Rosenkrantzgt. 3, 5000 Bergen, Norway

RNIB. Royal National Institute for the Blind, 224 Great Portland Street, London, W1N 6AA, England

RPH-SYN. Rikscentralen f' or Pedagogiska, Hjalpmedel f' or Synskadade,

Tomtebodav' agen 11, 171 64 Solna, Sweden
SK. Sokeain Kirjasto, Mäkelänk 58-60, 00510 Helsinki 51, Finland
SNB. Regione Toscana—Stamperia Braille, Istituto Nazionale dei Ciechi "Vittorio Emanuele II," Firenze 50131—Via Aurelio Nicolodi n. 2, Postale n. 5/1257, Italy
STBB. Statens Trykkeri og Bibliotek for Blinde, Rønnegade 1, 2100 København Ø, Denmark
VFB. Verein zur Förderung der Blindenbildung e.V., 26 Bleekstrasse, Hannover-Kirchrode 3000, Federal Republic of Germany

Copies of the *Dictionary of Braille Music Signs* (braille and large-print editions) and catalogs in the Music and Musician series can be obtained by writing or calling the Music Section, National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, Library of Congress, Washington, DC 20542, (800) 424-8567. Comments about this column and braille reading questions can be sent to Bettye Krolick, 602 Ventura Road, Champaign, IL 61820.

New Music Materials

The following works are available on loan from the Music Section, National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, Library of Congress, Washington, DC 20542.

Press braille and most recorded materials may also be purchased from their respective producers. Large-print scores are available on loan only. The listings show, in order and where possible, composer, title, Music Section catalog no. (i.e., BRM, CBM, and LPM number), print publisher, braille producer, and braille and recorded producer number (e.g., RNIB 24567, FXM 36055). Codes for braille and recorded producers are given below under "Sources."

Materials in the music collection are available on two-month, renewable loan.

Sources

HC. Handcopied braille; generally available only on loan from the Library of Congress
NBT. Norges Blindeforbunds Trykkeri, Rosenkrantzgt. 3, 5000 Bergen, Norway
RNIB. Royal National Institute for the Blind, 224 Great Portland Street, London, W1N 6AA, England
VFB. Verein zur Förderung der Blindenbildung e.V., 26 Bleekstrasse, Hannover-Kirchrode 3000, Federal Republic of Germany

Braille

Scores

Choral Music

Brahms, Johannes, 1833–1897
Ein Deutsches Requiem BRM 27046
For soli, SATB, Chor, Klavier; text in English and German. Peters. HC

Harpsichord Music

Ferguson, Howard, comp., 1908–
Style and Interpretation: vol. 1. England and France BRM 25695
Oxford University Press. HC

Scarlatti, Domenico, 1685–1757
Sonata in D, Longo 12, KP 478 BRM 27058
Ricordi. RNIB 44796

Piano Music, Arranged

Gluck, Christoph Willibald, Ritter von, 1714–1787
Anglaise (from *Iphigénie en Aulide)* BRM 27268
F.W. Vogel. VFB 2497

Gavotte (from *Aleceste*) BRM 27286
F.W. Vogel. VFB 2485

Pantomim (from *Orfeo ed Euridice*) BRM 27302
F.W. Vogel. VFB 2709

Pavane (from *Armide*) BRM 27289
F.W. Vogel. VFB 2493

Sicilienne (from *Armide*) BRM 27269
F.W. Vogel. VFB 2495

Sklaventanz (from *Iphigénie en Aulide*) BRM 27288

F.W. Vogel. VFB 2503

Tambourin (from *Iphigénie en Aulide*) BRM 27273
F.W. Vogel. VFB 2504

Wagner, Richard, 1813–1883.
Prelude *(Lohengrin)* BRM 27285
F.W. Vogel. VFB 489

Piano Music, Four Hands

Mozart, Wolfgang Amadeus, 1756–1791
Overture *(La Clemenza de Tito)* BRM 27292
F.W. Vogel. VFB 2538–2539

Popular Vocal Music

Arthur's theme (Best that you may do) BRM 27330
by Burt F. Bacharach
With piano acc. and chord symbols.
Warner Bros. Music. RNIB 45254

Golden brown BRM 27329
by Jean Jacques Burnell
With piano acc. and chord symbols.
EMI Music. RNIB 45253

Mickey BRM 27485
by Nicky Chinn and Mike Chapman
With piano acc. and chord symbols.
Chinichap Publishing. RNIB 45256

Popular Music Lead Sheets, no. 6

Georgy girl
My life
The rose
Silver threads and golden needles
White Christmas

Popular Music Lead Sheets, no. 7

Don't it make my brown eyes blue
Hello, Dolly
Someone that I used to love
Spanish eyes
Summertime

Tain't what you do, it's the way that cha do it BRM 27485
by Sy Oliver and James Young
With piano acc. and chord symbols.
MCA Music. RNIB 45257

Violin Music, Arranged

Paganini, Nicolò, 1782–1840
Allegro maestoso (from *Concerto No. 1, op. 6, E flat major*) BRM 26355
Orchestral acc. arr. for piano. Peters. VFB 3782

Schubert, Franz, 1797–1828
Ellens Gesange, D. 839 (Ave Maria) and Am Meer (from *Schwanengesang*) BRM 26825
Arr. for violin and piano; originally for voice and piano. Schott. NBT

Violoncello Music, Arranged

Mozart, Wolfgang Amadeus, 1756–1791
Adagio (from *Concerto for clarinet,* K. 622, A major) BRM 26976
Arr. for cello and piano; originally for clarinet and orchestra. Leuckart. VFB 3202

Vocal Music, Arias

Mozart, Wolfgang Amadeus, 1756–1791
Ten Arias from Operas BRM 26056
For coloratura soprano and piano; text in English. HC

Ach ich liebte, war so glücklich (from *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*)
Bester Jüngling (from *The Impressario*)

Da schlägt die Abschiedsstunde (from *The Impressario*)
Dal tuo gentil sembiante (from *Ascanio in Alba*)
Durch Zärtlichkeit (from *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*)
Der Hölle Rache (from *Die Zauberflöte*)
Martern aller Arten (from *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*)
O zittrenicht (from *Die Zauberflöte*)
Parto, m'affretto (from *Lucio Silla*)
Welcher Wechsel (from *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*)

Vocal Music, Art Songs

Bergsma, William Laurence, 1921–
Six Songs to Poems by E.E. Cummings BRM 26016
For high voice and piano; text in English. C. Fischer. HC

Doll's boy's asleep
Hist whist
It may not always be so
Jimmy's got a goil, goil, goil
Thy fingers make early flowers of all things
When God lets my body be

Olsen, Ole
Solefaldssang BRM 26822
For medium voice and piano; text in Danish, Swedish, and German. Norsk Musikforlag. NBT

Strauss, Richard, 1813–1883
Letzte Lieder BRM 27045
For high voice and piano; text in English and German. Boosey and Hawkes. HC

Beim Schlafengehen
Frühling
Im Abendrot
September

Wagner, Richard, 1813–1883
Gedichte von Mathilde Wesendonck (Wesendonk-Lieder) BRM 27000
For soprano and piano; text in English and German. Peters. HC

Angel's mission (Der Engel)
The bliss of sorrow (Schmerzen)
Dreams (Träume)
In a greenhouse (Im Treibhaus)
Stay thy toil (Stehe Still)

Vocal Music, Sacred Songs

Jordan, Sverre
Herre, Herre, Du har kalla and Du vesle bekk på villan mo BRM 26663
For medium voice and piano; text in Norwegian and German (Herr, O Herr, Du hast geboten and Du bächlein ohne Rast und Ruh). Norsk Musikforlag. NBT

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The National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped loans braille, cassette, large-print, and other special materials to blind, partially sighted, or physically handicapped musicians, music students, and persons who enjoy music. The following materials and services are available.

- Braille books about music
- Braille music scores for all instruments and voice
- Beginning self-instruction courses for piano, organ, and guitar, on cassette
- Books, lectures, interviews, demonstrations, and other educational materials, on cassettes and discs
- Large-print music scores for all instruments and voice
- Large-print books about music
- Subscriptions to *Stereo Review* and *Music Journal*, on talking-book disc
- *Contemporary Sound Track: A Review of Pop, Jazz, Rock, and Country*. Selected articles from print music and news periodicals, recorded on cassette
- *Popular Music Lead Sheets*. Words, melodies, and chords for selected popular songs, old and new, in braille
- *Music Article Guide*. An annotated index to selected articles in about 150 American music magazines, in braille and on cassette (braille and cassette copies of articles on request).
- Reference services and assistance in locating information about music and musicians

For further information, write:

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